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A very rare setting forth of the principles
& listing of the Englameter

For the Englameter hymnody see Julian 768[2]

The Rendal hymn Ye I have
If I have the Englameter "official coll"
Julian refers to them not identified at
Maybe be meant the Rendal by the or the Coll"
of 1748 noted in my The Earliest Hymns 1+13

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HISTORICAL SKETCHES

OF THE RISE OF THE

SCOTS OLD INDEPENDENT

AND

The Inghamite Churches;

WITH THE

CORRESPONDENCE

Which led to their Union.

COLNE:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY H. EARNSHAW;

And may be had of JAMES M'GAVIN, Paisley; ALEXANDER PETERKIN, Glasgow; DAVID HILL, Edinburgh; THOMAS HUNTER, Dundee; ALEXANDER COUTTS, Perth; J. PEARSON, Kendal; JOHN BRIGGS, Howden; JOHN BEE, Tadcaster; JOSEPH NICHOLSON, Leeds; JAMES and JOSHUA COCKSHUTT, Bradford; JOSEPH CHURCHILL, Nottingham; ROBERT HORROCKS, Bulwell; NORMAN FOLDS, Todmorden; and THOMAS PILKINGTON, Haslingden.

1814.

PREFACE.

THE primary object, in the publication of the following pages, is to give to the members of those churches now united in the COMMON FAITH, all the information respecting each other, which the relation they now stand in necessarily requires; so that their faith and order may afford mutual ground of rejoicing; and that thus, through the blessing of God, they may be stimulated, in these "perilous times," to "hold fast the form of sound words," which they have heard of the Lord and his apostles, "to provoke one another to love and to good works," "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and to "strive together for the faith of the gospel."

The reader will perceive that the brethren in England are in the practice of having a social meeting once a year. For its design, and the manner in which it is conducted, see Mr. Pearson's letter to Mr. M'Gavin, of 13th February. This meeting has generally been called a *Conference;* a term which it would probably be difficult to prove was improper; but it is considered by some to be too indefinite, and too liable to misconstruction by persons unacquainted with its nature and design; as the same term is used by a body of people (whose general and leading

doctrines and practices are considered by these churches as unscriptural) for a meeting which they hold annually, expressly to regulate their affairs, to make laws, &c. &c. Such societies, and such meetings, these churches view as exhibiting awful proofs of their antichristian character;—*there* is to be seen Antichrist, as he is delineated by Paul, sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself to be above God, or all that is worshipped. Now as these churches profess to acknowledge no legislator amongst them but the "King of Zion," and no laws but what he has promulgated in the scriptures of truth, the "oracles of God," they consider it their duty to be jealous of arrogating to themselves, in any respect, his authority, and that they should discountenance whatever may even be thought to have that tendency, were it only in name. Under these considerations the brethren would recommend that the meeting, which has usually been called the Conference, should in future be denominated the YEARLY SOCIAL MEETING.

The publication of these pages has been objected to, on the ground that they may at some after period be referred to, as a standard of faith and practice, which is known to have been the case with similar productions. To prevent, as effectually as possible, any such use being made of them, the brethren chiefly engaged in composing the work, DO (and they believe all in fellowship with them do also) most solemnly protest against any thing of the kind. They reject any

thing whatever being made a test of doctrine or practice, but the scriptures of truth. They consider it the most daring rebellion against the majesty of heaven to claim the authority of him who "will not give his glory to another." And they would, in the most impressive manner, caution those into whose hands this pamphlet may come, to take nothing merely on their authority, which is only the testimony of men; but to hearken to his authority who said, "Search the Scriptures:" and to be found imitating the example of the noble Bereans, whose conduct the apostle so highly commends, in that they searched the Scriptures, to see whether the things even *he* spoke were agreeable thereto. And they would intreat them to receive what is here stated no farther than it is found consonant with the genuine import of the "lively oracles:" for it is only an exhibition, by those churches, of what they think they have attained unto, and in many respects may perhaps be expressed in a manner not altogether to the mind of some individuals; and in some respects the reader will see that there is a difference of opinion, but indeed only such as has been readily considered matter of forbearance.

ERRATA.

In consequence of the distance from the press of the principal writers of this publication, the following Errors have crept in. They are mostly of that nature as to be corrected by the pen, and which the reader is requested to do before proceeding.

PAGE II. (SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE S. O. I.) line 25 from the top, for *even* read *or*.
VI. line 33, for *member* read *number*.

PAGE 3 (CORRESPONDENCE) line 22 from the top, delete the word *the* before *christian*.
17 line 1, instead of *Braig* read *Craig*.
23 in line 24 from top, after the words *a master in heaven*, insert a *period*, and begin the next word with a capital *A*.
24 line 10 from top, instead of *suspected* read *expected*.
27 line 14, instead of *Inghamates* read *Inghamites*.
36 line 3 and 2 from the foot, instead of *and not those who wish to draw from us, or be separated, &c.* read *and not those who withdraw from us, or may be separated, &c.*
38 line 1 from top, instead of *representing* read *represented*.
line 2, instead of *conscience* read *consciences*.
line 30, instead of *respects* read *respect*.
39 line 2, instead of *Thiatira* read *Thyatira*.
line 4, after the words "*yea, hath God said,*" should be a period, and the next word to begin with a capital *T*.
line 13 from top, instead of *wishing* read *wish*.
43 line 16 from the foot, instead of *letter* read *letters*.

A

SHORT ACCOUNT

Of the Rise and Establishment of the

CHURCHES IN SCOTLAND,

COMMONLY DENOMINATED

THE OLD SCOTCH INDEPENDENTS.

TO trace out the beginnings of truth in the mind of man, is what seldom can be attained with any degree of accuracy; especially when the object of inquiry is at a distance of forty or fifty years before the time in which we live. Indeed it may truly be said, "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit." This must certainly be held true respecting all God's children, in being born again by the incorruptible seed of the word: but Scripture and experience teach us that an enlarged acquaintance with divine truth is progressive, and that with a dependance on the teaching of the Holy Spirit it requires much study and meditation in comparing spiritual things with spiritual. External circumstances are also often made use of by God to open the minds of men in the knowledge and obedience of his holy word. Thus do his chosen grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in conformity unto his blessed image.

A short time prior to the year 1768, two clergymen of the established church in Fifeshire, viz. James Smith, at Newburn, and Robert Ferrier, at Largo, whose parishes were adjoining, began to have many scruples in their minds, as to the obligations they had come under on their accepting their ministerial charges. They had subscribed the formula of the church of Scotland, declaring thereby that they believed the whole doctrine of the Westminster confession of faith to be the truth of God. Their minds were afterwards opened to see they had sinned against God and his holy word, the only rule of faith and manners: for although they still perceived many excellent things in the said confession of faith, yet they now saw that it abounded with doctrines subversive of the nature of Christ's kingdom, and of the gospel thereof. After much consultation betwixt themselves, their consciences allowing them no longer to remain in that connexion, they withdrew, along with a few others likeminded, belonging to each of their Congregations, and assembled together, as a church, in a house built for them at Balchristie. As they had been subjected

to much reproach and misrepresentation, and that the world might have a just view of the matter, these two gentlemen published a pamphlet intituled "The case of James Smith, late minister at Newburn, and of Robert Ferrier, late minister at Largo, truly represented and defended. Edinburgh: priated for the authors by A. Donaldson, 1768;" containing 60 pages 8vo.* In which they say, "Our views at that time (viz. when put into their ministry in the church of Scotland) were such as we judged it our duty to subscribe; (the formula, &c.) but since then we have gradually, and especially more lately, received other views of the matter. Candor, therefore, and honesty called upon us, we thought, to retract our said subscriptions, resign our ministerial charge, and renounce the living, and benefice thereunto annexed."

The Westminster confession of faith holds it to be scriptural, that the church is to be governed by kirk sessions, presbyteries, provincial synods, and general assemblies: but they could find no such thing, either in name or substance, in all the New Testament, as church *courts*, and in a most clear and distinct manner shew them to be antichristian. They acknowledge that they find the word *presbytery*; but they prove it to be something very different from "*a classis;*" but such a presbytery only as was settled in every particular church or congregation, viz. the eldership of a church. Again, they could find no such thing in the word of God, as what the confession of faith holds forth as a church representative, even church collective; i. e. several congregations in a province or nation constituting one church. They considered the church in Israel as forming but one congregation, assembling at one place, and under the New Testament state each particular congregation forming a complete church. "The first Christian churches in every country or province where they were planted, are in no instance called the church of that province or country, but always churches there." They very ably shew that every single congregation, united in the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel, is independent of any other congregation; and that by having the Lord Jesus Christ as their head, they are complete in themselves. Only as it may respect the distribution of their substance, or communication of their gifts, they are called to correspond with one another in love, even to the asking of advice. They next found that "the grant of the keys of the kingdom of heaven is urged, but very improperly, in favour of the exclusive powers of the clergy: for that grant plainly appears to have terminated in the apostles. The gospel which was committed unto them to preach, reveals and opens heaven, or brings life and immortality to light. In believing this gospel, possession thereof is obtained; but this gospel not believed, heaven remains shut; there is access no other way. Professing

* Though the writer of this has attended the Independents in Scotland for twenty-six years, and been a member among them about twenty-one years; yet he never saw this publication till within these few days. It is a pamphlet of great merit, but so scarce as hardly to be obtained at any price.

the faith of this gospel opens an entrance into the visible kingdom of heaven. No other gospel is to be preached, nor is any other discipline to be introduced, but what the apostles received of their divine Master, which they have taught, and which they practised, as there was occasion. Elders in no age have authority to teach or practise any new discipline. They have only power to preside and moderate, or *lead* in the church meetings, which is the proper import of the word *rule*. They are along with the church to deliver their opinion in applying the apostolic discipline unto the objects thereof; and when the church acts as they (viz. the apostles) have taught, their sentence is declared by the head of the church to stand ratified.

Again, they declare, the manner of communion in the national church to be unscriptural. "The holy Scripture most expressly forbids unequal yoking in church fellowship, 2 Cor. vi. 14, *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers*, &c. See also 1 Cor. v. 7; 2 Thess. iii. 6; Heb. xii. 15. We found it upon trial quite impracticable, in connexion with that church, to pay due regard to these and like Scriptures, and were therefore inclineable to be disengaged, that we might be at liberty to conform more to what appears of great importance in religion; and that we might be under less restraint in reducing to practice the whole instituted discipline in Christ's house, in connexion with such as shall be found by us like minded."

They had subscribed to such words as these in the confession of faith, viz. "That the civil magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the church, that the truth be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruption and abuses in worship or discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered and observed: and for the better effecting whereof he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God. Now this they had come to see to be not only a direct subversion of the New Testament plan, but to be in direct opposition to that "good confession which Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate. He asserted his royalty, and said he was a king, but that his kingdom was not of this world." Hence they proceed to take a view in a simple and clear manner, both of the internal and external nature of Christ's kingdom, as not of this world, as distinct from all the kingdoms of this world, and in no respect regulated by the prudence and maxims thereof. In doing so they go through the whole plan and order of the New Testament churches, their ordinances, office-bearers, &c. and also of some of the effects that the gospel will have upon them who believe it. Men whose minds are in subjection to creeds and confessions of faith, drawn up by fallible creatures, walking in the doctrines and commandments of men, have no satisfaction in drinking out of the pure fountain of truth; nay, they will shut their eyes lest they should see: but when once the charm is, by divine power, broken, when they are led to know the import of these words:—"Ye are not redeemed with corrupt-

ible things, such as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." Then the mind expands, and the heart being opened, it attends to the things spoken by the Lord, casting creeds and confessions, and the sayings of the fathers, to the moles and to the bats. Then they will have nothing but a "thus saith the Lord."*

Such to a certain degree then did these gentlemen appear to be. They came to learn that many other things were contained in the Westminster confession repugnant to the truths of the gospel: for instance, it is said that "The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding;" (so far good) but "the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."† Also, on faith it is said, "The principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life." But they add, "To us it appears, that faith, as it is in us (for in Scripture it often means that which is believed) doth not consist in a train of mental actings, as above mentioned, and the like, which are indeed inseparable effects of faith, but are not so many ingredients in its precise nature. Faith is not a complex but a simple thing. It is that knowledge which we get of a truth or fact by means of testimony, and is called faith on that very account. Then they go on to shew that saving faith is the knowledge of God's testimony concerning his beloved Son, that he is well pleased in his obedience unto the death, having raised him from the dead, and given him glory; and when this discovery is got from God's word, it most naturally produces a receiving, resting, and relying upon him for salvation; as also a love of him, and a willing subjection to him in every thing, as the fruits and effects of the truth understood and simply believed. After having stated a number of other things not noticed here, and answered objections against their views, they conclude their pamphlet thus:—"Besides what is contained in these sections of the confession of faith, which we have objected to, as not founded upon and agreeable to the word of God. There are several other expressions in that confession, with which we are not fully satisfied, as authorized by that word; but having already enlarged so much, we shall forbear mentioning particulars."

Such being their views, their faith and hope resting in the word and promise of God, they hearkened to his command. "*Come out from among them, and be ye separated, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.*" The consequence was, as mentioned above, they met by themselves, along with those of their congregations respectively, who

* It is not to be inferred from these words that the writer supposes perfection here; no, while we carry about a body of sin, we are still very liable to err through ignorance; and nothing is more to be guarded against than our early prejudices, in consequence of being taught to reverence such things as standards of truth.

† Some things on this subject will be found in the following correspondence.

came along with them professing the same faith. In a short time the church became pretty numerous. They ordained Messrs. Smith and Ferrier as overseers among them, and also others of their number to look after the poor: so that here was, at least to outward appearance, such a church as those described by the apostles, even as the church at Philippi, with their bishops and deacons, continuing stedfastly in the observation of all things that their Lord had commanded them, so far as yet they had been instructed. Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, they were edified, and multiplied.*

The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them who take pleasure therein. He makes the wrath of man to praise him. The wickedness of men shall return upon their own head; but even their spiritual sorceries, fornications, and thefts, shall be to the praise of him who is exalted head over all things to his body the church, and to the good of those who are called according to his purpose. Was it not the wickedness of the clergy, and the profuse sale of indulgencies, that roused the zeal of the famous Martin Luther, so as to be an instrument in the hand of providence, in bringing about the ever memorable reformation from popery?

What is now to be related may not be considered as of comparative magnitude; notwithstanding it is worthy to be recorded.—At a period betwixt the years 1760 and 1768, the magistrates and town council of Glasgow entered into a process at law with the general session of that city, as to the right of patronage. By a decree of the judges the former prevailed, and were declared patrons. The consequence, in the first place, was, a clergyman was thrust into the Wynd church against the minds of those called the orthodox part of the congregation, especially the late David Dale, Archibald Paterson, Matthew Alexander, and a few others. These gentlemen immediately opened a subscription, and in a short time obtained funds sufficient to build a relief meeting-house: but though this was obtained, and a clergyman† got to their minds; yet the conduct of the rulers was such, as not only to lose the affections of many of the devout people in the city from the establishment, but their minds being once set afloat, they also began to have doubts about the presbyterian form and order of churches, &c. About this time John Barclay (well known afterwards as the leader of the people in this country called Bereans) came to Glasgow from Fettercairn, where he had resided as an assistant preacher, and becoming acquainted with Mr. Dale and his friends, tended much to direct their views to the word of God. Mr. Barclay, though a boisterous and disagreeable speaker in the pulpit, was an agreeable companion in private conversation, and possessed most clear and distinct views of the gospel of the grace of God. He in the most forcible manner recommended to Mr. Dale and his intimates the excellency of the Scriptures,

* Of late years that church has been considerably reduced in members, and mostly old people.

† A Mr. Cruden.

pressing upon them to throw aside the writings, &c. of the clergy, and to search with their own eyes the words of eternal life, by which they would be judged at the last day. Without any exception he condemned all books of human composition, on the word of God, wishing that whatever had been written on it were gathered together into one heap, and his own little tracts used as a match to set them on fire.* Such doctrine was quite new to these people; but it was a mean of directing their attention to the words of the Lord, who says, "Search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me." Messrs. Dale, &c. soon came to see that the kingdom of the clergy, under whatever denomination, and the kingdom of Jesus Christ, were as opposite as light and darkness; that the Christian brotherhood and brotherly love, so much insisted on in the word of God, and exemplified in the New Testament Scriptures, were incompatible with the presbyterian system; that the Lord's Supper and a presbyterian sacrament were very distinct things. They now began to observe to one another, that it appeared from the New Testament that the Lord's Supper should be observed every first day of the week; that this was a principal part of that day's service; and that those who came together to break bread, should be known to each other as brethren by a joint profession of the faith. They therefore found it their duty to withdraw from Mr. Cruden; and Messrs. Dale, Paterson, and Alexander, with three others, mutually professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and repentance towards God; and immediately assembled together for worship in a private house. They remained but a short time to meet privately. Their numbers soon began to increase; and Mr. Paterson built their present large and commodious house in the Gray Friars Wynd. Just about the same time the case of Smith and Ferrier was published, and came into their hands. They were forcibly struck by it; and it was determined to send a chosen member to Fife; in consequence of which an union was formed betwixt the church at Balchristie and them. Their communications became frequent; and at last it was proposed to the church at Balchristie to send Mr. Ferrier to Glasgow, which being agreed unto, they chose one James Simpson, a weaver at Largo, to be Mr. Smith's colleague; and at Glasgow the church with all speed proceeded to look out, from among themselves, one to take part in the oversight, along with Mr. Ferrier. Mr. Dale was unanimously chosen, and set apart with fasting and prayer. At this time the church consisted of about twenty-five members of both sexes. When their new house was first opened, they were visited with a tumultuous assemblage of people. They had many adversaries. Indeed there was no denomination endured more reproach and ridicule than Mr. Dale and his friends did at this time, not only from the baser sort, but also from many of those who shewed themselves to be the lineal descendants of the ancient Pharisees. Mr. Dale was for a while openly insulted in

* This was rather extravagant; had he said ninety-nine out of every one hundred, he would at that time have been more correct.

the streets, and looked upon as a person that ought not to be suffered to live. The meeting-house was also violently assaulted with stones: but by patient enduring they overcame, and in well doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Many clave unto them, not only in the city, but likewise from Hamilton and Paisley.

Scarcely two years had elapsed, when various things were agitated, and proposed for the consideration of the church, which they were not yet in the practice of: such as, that the Lord's prayer should form part of the worship on the first day of the week; that the assent of the brethren should be given to the prayers of the church by audibly saying, Amen; and that they should stand while singing, as well as in praying. They could not then see eye to eye as to these things. Mr Dale pressed the law of forbearance, till they had time to consider; but Mr. Ferrier insisted upon a unity of mind and judgment. The consequence was, that he and a few that adhered to him withdrew from Mr Dale, and took part with the church in fellowship with Mr. Glass.* The things which led to this division were, after some years forbearance, fully practised.

On the week after the deputation from Glasgow to Fife, John Mill, watchmaker, and James Mitchell, farmer at Montrose, arrived at Mr. Smith's, having seen the "case," after some agreeable conversation, they returned home, and commenced a correspondence both with Balchristie and Glasgow. In a short time some of the members of the latter went to reside at Montrose. They altogether formed themselves into church order, when Mr. Mill and a James Good from Glasgow were chosen Elders. This church, during a number of years, maintained a very respectable appearance; but lately, on account of various differences, their numbers became quite reduced, and those who remain in that place are connected with the church at Marykirk, from whence the latter first originated. The churches at Perth, Methven, and Kirkcaldy sprung from Balchristie; and those in Paisley, Hamilton, and N. Lanark, from the church in Glasgow. The church in Edinburgh began in consequence of a correspondence with some of the Glasgow people; and in a short time were added to it many of what are called respectable characters, and of great abilities; but such did not allow them to be long at rest. The subject of infant baptism was agitated; against which doctrine two of their Elders declared themselves, and carried off with them the great majority of the church. In like manner a church at Galashields was planted; it was never large, and at present it consists only of four women and one man.†

Somewhat above two years ago the church in Edinburgh corresponded with a church there under the pastoral care of a Mr. R. which originally sprung from the Tabernacle; and after renouncing the practice of occasional communion, as unscriptural,

* Mr. Dale and his friends disagreed considerably in many respects with the Glassites, not only in doctrine, but more particularly in practice.

† It was overlooked to state this among the other churches in page 21.

united into one body; but after having fluttered for a few months, apparently in the beauty of primitive Christianity, they flew off at a tangent, and got into an aurelia state, from which they have since evolved to a general dispersion; some to one bush, and some to another, each according to his own particular taste.

The church in London, though much larger at one period, was never numerous. Their rise took place in consequence of a correspondence betwixt a few friends there with Messrs. Mill and Dale.

The brethren at Earlsferry were lately connected with those of the Tabernacle persuasion; but united themselves with these churches about eighteen months ago.

About the year 1807, or 1808, a small church was erected at Airdrie, being a branch from Hamilton. They were not long in order till they espoused a system of pretty extensive charity, if it may be so called. It became a matter of indifference whether their members were Baptists or Pædobaptists; or whether they were members of other denominations, provided they could please themselves with a favourable opinion of the persons. Mr. R. H—ne came to reside in the place, when there he and they enjoyed fellowship together; but when in Edinburgh or Glasgow he preferred connexion with others. When the church in Airdrie found such things to be displeasing to their friends in other places, they pressed them hard with letters, calling upon them to determine, or say whether or not they were believers of the truth, and if so, why stand separate from them, or refuse to continue to them the right hand of fellowship? but the other churches considered they had no right to determine such a question farther than works bore evidence; and as they had refused to hear the admonitions tendered them (some of which at least were in consequence of their own letters) it was considered that by their practice they had withdrawn themselves from the other churches (having mostly become Baptists) and allowed, of course, without further remonstrance, to stand to their own Master, unto whom all are accountable.

The church in Dundee was founded by a Mr. Andrew Scott, who had been a pastor to the Anti-burgher congregation there. The formation of the church took place about the year 1769. The cause of Mr. Scott's leaving the Anti-Burgher seceders was owing to an important change of sentiment which had taken place in his mind concerning the nature of Christ's kingdom, and the laws and ordinances of his house. Being now fully convinced that the kingdom of Jesus is not of this world, he felt his mind revolt at the practice of what is called swearing the covenants, so zealously contended for by the people of that persuasion, and made by them a term of communion. Mr. Scott made known his scruples, concerning this and other points, to his brethren in the ministry, requesting their counsel and advice, anxiously entreating them to point out his error, if his views were unscriptural: but this they either declined, or were not able to do. His sentiments were, by order of the presbytery, laid before them, and after that laid before the associate synod, for their deliberation;

but they declined entering into the merits of the case. Mr. Scott's views being opposed to their received and sworn to principles. In place of endeavouring to recover a brother from the error of his way, if his views were contrary to the word of truth, they passed a sentence against him of suspension, and soon after of deposition and excommunication.*

When systems of religion are warped with human inventions, those who espouse them naturally shrink from investigation: but when the principles upon which any society of professing Christians act, are founded upon Scripture, they rather court than shun inquiry. Mr. Scott's views seem to have been of this kind, as clearly appears from his writings. His sentiments were embraced by a considerable number of those among whom he had been laboring; for it is said, about seventy of the members, including the majority of the session cleaved to him after his deposition, and requested him to take the oversight of them, that without delay they might be formed into a church of Christ, and enjoy the precious privilege of attending to all the things he had commanded. Mr Scott accordingly accepted the invitation; and now they began to act as a church modelled, as they hoped, agreeably to the pattern laid down in the New Testament. Their views of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel were allowed to be sound and scriptural; and their minds were now in a great measure set free from those fetters of human traditions, with which they had formerly been bound, concerning the nature, laws, and ordinances of Christ's house. However, to begin with, they only attended to the Lord's supper once a month; but they soon saw it to be more scriptural to observe it every first day of the week. They attended to reading, preaching, exhortation of the brethren, the fellowship for the poor saints, prayers and praises, approving and practising infant baptism, and receiving members in the public meetings of the church by professing the faith, or by stating to the individual the principles upon which they, as a church, were united, and requesting his assent, after having conversed with the pastor and some of the brethren in private. They met once through the week in the evening for mutual edification. They approved of a plurality of Elders. Mr. Scott was wholly supported by the church. His income was £45 a year: a sum, though small, was yet sufficiently large to be raised by so few, and those chiefly laboring people. Their number was of course small, as they saw the importance of attending strictly to the discipline enjoined by the great Head of the church. Mr. Scott continued to labor with great acceptance for about twenty years. His manner was grave, and frequently energetic. His mind was well informed, and his society much valued by many unconnected with

* The reader for an account of Mr. Scott's change of sentiment, and a controversy carried on betwixt him and the late Mr. Adam Gibb of Edinburgh, is referred to two publications, printed in 1770, the one intituled, "The rise, grounds, and progress of the late difference between the Anti-burgher seceders, and Andrew Scott, minister of the gospel, Dundee;" the other, "The peculiar scheme of the Anti-burgher seceders unmasked, in a series of letters to Mr. Adam Gibb, minister of the gospel, Edinburgh."

the church: but as in all others, so in him also the spots of humanity occasionally appeared: being bred up as a clergyman, a little of that kind of consequence seemed to cleave to him to the last, and his sun in the church there went down under a cloud. Though far advanced in life, he was overtaken in sin, which occasioned much grief to the church, and much bitter anguish of heart to himself. Being unmarried, it appeared that an illicit intercourse had taken place betwixt him and his servant, as she became with child by him. He readily acknowledged his guilt, and discovered much genuine contrition of heart on this account; and it is not doubted, but this, with all his other sins, were washed away in that fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. He soon after left Dundee, and went to London, to reside with a brother, where he died a few years after. From regard to his previous character a veil would willingly have been thrown over this part of the narrative; but the circumstances being well known, there might have been a charge of partiality. There was for some time a connexion kept up with a small church in Newburgh, under the care of Mr. Pirie, who is well known by his writings. A friendly correspondence also existed with a church at Sacheburne, in which a Mr. M'Crea was then pastor. Mr. Scott, about ten months previous to the termination of his labors in Dundee, saw the necessity of having a plurality of Elders; and in April 1789, they ordained Alexander Kirkcaldy, shoemaker, who was one of their deacons, to that office. Mr. Kirkcaldy was no sooner into the pastoral charge, than the greater part of the duty devolved upon him, owing to the weakly state of his colleague, and he had soon the painful duty to discharge of presiding at the exclusion from the church of the person who had so lately ordained him, and which he did in a very faithful manner. After a conscientious discharge of his office he died in April 1803. In his time the church declined much in numbers, owing to removals and change of sentiment. As the church at this time was rather deficient in gifts for edification, by the recommendation of Mr. Pirie, they invited a Mr. William Maxton, who had been educated at one of Mr. Haldane's classes, to take the oversight of them, with which he immediately complied; and after a short acquaintance was set apart to the Elder's office, viz. in June 1803, who after a successful labor for seven years, died much regretted by the church, and all who had the pleasure of his company. After the decease of Mr. Maxton, many in the church disapproved of the practice so often followed of calling a stranger who had been educated for the ministry at some academy. They thought it more scriptural to look out from among themselves persons to take the oversight of the church: to this, those of more popular sentiments could not agree, and therefore withdrew from their fellowship. After due deliberation, and asking direction of the Lord, they made choice of James Donald, manufacturer, who on the 1st of March 1810, was set apart to the Elders office by prayer and fasting. Soon after this the church received an addition of members, who had belonged unto the Tabernacle connexion; and as Mr. Donald found the duties of his office rather heavy for him, he

proposed to the church to make choice of another brother, to take part with him in the work. The matter was taken into serious consideration, and they united in making choice of Thomas Hunter, merchant, in Dundee. About this time they gave up with public collections at the door, as it was thought more scriptural for the church alone to defray its own expences; and for this purpose a contribution is made immediately after the Lord's supper, from which the poor are supplied, and other necessary disbursements;* so that those who please to attend enjoy the privilege of hearing the gospel without charge. This church was now in a great measure alone. The connexion betwixt the church at Newburgh dropt after the death of Mr. Pirie; and the correspondence also with the people at Sacheburn had ceased, owing to some change in that church. In this kind of solitude they continued, till about August 1812, when a friendly intercourse took place betwixt the church in Perth and them; and after fully understanding the sentiments and order of each other, both expressed a strong desire of being united together in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, which took place on the 25th of October following. On that day, the Elder and one of the deacons of the church in Perth visited them; and having reported the matter to the other churches in connexion, the union was formed to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.†

Since the formation of these churches, many of them have been subjected to a variety of vicissitudes, chiefly arising from controversial subjects. About the year 1799, the church in Hamilton was much reduced by Arminianism, which carried with it one of their Elders, who was indeed the leader in the controversy, having before manifested very superior abilities in preaching the doctrine of free grace. In Glasgow, Paisley, and Perth, they have often had to contend against the Baptist principles; and in each of these places Elders have espoused these doctrines.‡ Indeed this was not to be wondered at, so long as the writings of John Glass were so much admired as they had been. In these writings, especially in the so much esteemed "Testimony of the King of martyrs." The very essence of these doctrines is to be found predominating over the many grand sayings it contains respecting the nature of Christ's kingdom, so as to be like the dead fly in

* As this collection is made by them before the apostle's benediction is pronounced, it is not only more orderly, but if words have any meaning, it is more like having fellowship one with another in contributing of their substance, than the mode practised by a number of the churches, viz. of first dismissing the congregation, and then contributing as they go out; notwithstanding its being considered as an ordinance to be stedfastly continued in on the first day of the week; and for a due and proper attention to which, prayer is regularly addressed to the throne of grace.

† In the following pages the number of members in the church at Dundee is stated to be about forty; but it is found to consist of about fifty, and only one remains who saw its commencement. The enumeration of the members of the several churches in Scotland, was rather hastily collected.

‡ Since this union took place, Henry Mitchell, one of the Elders at Balchristie, has left the church on the same subject.

the apothecary's ointment.* The *carnality* of God's dispensation of his grace to ancient Israel, in opposition to the *spirituality* of New Testament churches—the *worldly* nature of Christ's kingdom in Judah—and the *letter of the law*, obedience so called, being well pleasing to Jehovah in these days, and entitling to his favor in Canaan—are all prominent doctrines in that gentleman's writings, and have been too prevalent amongst Pædobaptist churches in this country.†

The following correspondence contains the substance of the doctrines, &c. of these churches in Scotland denominated Independents, and also of those in England known by the name of Inghamites, who have in consequence thereof united together in church fellowship.

It has been observed by some who have seen part of the correspondence, that it contains too few scripture references and quotations; but it ought to be considered that it is not controversy that was intended, nor instruction to the ignorant; but simply a statement of views betwixt two parties supposed to be equally informed as to their faith, hope and obedience.

It may be observed, that the principal conductors of the said correspondence, lay no claim to literary abilities. They commenced the same without the least view of its publication, and, as it were, wrote at the impulse of the moment: nor is it now published for the sake of the public at large, but for the satisfaction of those churches immediately interested: so that the conductors of it have no apology to make for any grammatical blunders that it may contain.

* No disparagement is here intended to the memory of Mr. Glass. While we may and do esteem his memory, we are not bound to approve of his errors. No man knew this distinction better than his brother and cotemporary Robert Sandeman. There is no doubt but that John Glass meant well; but in opposing civil establishments of religion, he went to the other extreme.

† No church that is truly impressed with the import of these words, "Be not high minded, but fear," will talk much about their spirituality. No situation is better calculated to shew the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the workings of the carnal mind. There must be something radically wrong, when professed Christians begin to boast over the conduct of the Jews; or to set the one dispensation as a contrast against the other.

January 1814.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is to be regretted that no regular statement of the doctrines and practices of Mr. Ingham, and those in his connexion, previous to their change of sentiment, is to be found. These are to be inferred from incidences recorded in his, or Mr. W. Batty's journals. Though it might be supposed that the time is so recent that there would be little difficulty in procuring such information, that is by no means the case. Most of the members who were in the former connexion are dead, and those few who remain, though they may recollect many particular events, can not furnish a satisfactory statement.

There is reason to conclude that they were not agreed amongst themselves in doctrine. Mr. Lawrence Batty, who was some time a preacher in the connexion, held particular redemption, and his brother, Mr. William Batty, who was in the same capacity, was for a considerable time a

Baxterian. When Mr. Ingham first made a profession of religion, he embraced and propagated the doctrine of universal redemption, and those sentiments involved in it. But the light of divine truth gradually irradiated his mind, and continued increasing its genial influences, until it had dissipated those pestiferous clouds of error. The particular circumstances which contributed to this happy change of sentiment can not be ascertained, neither can any precise time be fixed on.

The compiler of these pages laments that he should have put his brethren's patience to so severe a trial, by the delay which has taken place in their publication. The principal reason for this delay, was the hope of receiving more circumstantial information than any he was in possession of, that the account might be rendered more accurate and interesting. In this respect, however, he is far from having succeeded to his wishes. Should another edition be called for, the account may probably be rendered less imperfect.

A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

CHURCHES IN ENGLAND,

COMMONLY DENOMINATED

INGHAMITES.

IN giving a narrative of the rise and establishment of these Churches, it may be proper to give a short account of Mr. Benjamin Ingham, as he was the principal person employed by divine providence, in their formation.

He was the son of William and Susannah Ingham, of Osset, in the Parish of Dewsbury, in the County of York. He was born there June 11th 1712. He received a liberal education at Batley School, and Queen's College Oxford. He entered the latter place October 10th 1730. During his residence there, he became acquainted with Mr. Charles Wesley, Mr. Morgan, Mr. John Wesley, and many others; who afterwards became very public characters. The following account will give the reader some idea of his religious principles at that period. "Their principles (alluding to the persons before mentioned) were to be good and do all the good they could, they fasted twice a week, prayed and examined themselves twice every hour, received the Sacrament every Sunday, visited the sick and prisoners, taught poor Children to read and write, gave alms, and frequently met together to read the scriptures.

On the 1st of June, 1735, Mr. Ingham was ordained to the ministry by Dr. John Potter, Bishop of Oxford. On the same day he commenced preaching, and preached his first sermon to the prisoners in Oxford Castle.

In consequence of a pressing request for his assistance in preaching from Mr. John Wesley, he embarked at London for Georgia, in America, on the 14th of October, 1735. He continued there a year and some months, during which time he visited Carolina and Pennsylvania, and then returned to England.

On his arrival at Ossett, his native place, he renewed his labours as a preacher in the established Church, and preached in all the Churches and Chapels in the neighbourhood. He professed to preach the "doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to the guilty." Great numbers of people attended wherever he preached, which raised the jealousy of the Clergy, and they prohibited him their Churches and Chapels. He then commenced preaching in the Fields, Barns, and Dwelling Houses, and the number of his converts continued to increase.

These were formed into Societies, and there were nearly sixty in different places, in Yorkshire, which were visited once a month

by Mr. Ingham, or those who assisted him in his labours.

While assisting Mr. Wesley in a America, an acquaintance commenced between him and the Moravians which continued for a number of years. They mutually assisted each other in preaching until Mr. Ingham became so dissatisfied with what he considered their arbitrary proceedings, that he broke off the connexion. *

In February 1743, Mr. Ingham first commenced preaching in Lancashire, at Colne-edge near Colne. He went in consequence of a solicitation from some persons who resided there.

In the latter part of the year 1745, Mr. W. Batty commenced speaking in public in those societies formed by Mr. Ingham. Through perseverance he soon became an useful and active preacher. He travelled about Newsholme, Slaidburn, Wigglesworth, Swinden, &c. &c. &c.

About this period Mr. Wesley's preachers were introduced into Lancashire and Craven, where Mr. Batty continued his labours in the absence of Mr. Ingham, who was then in Germany. Mr. Wesley too, about this time came to Roughlee near Colne, where Mr. Batty was also labouring. They had much conversation upon religion. Mr. Wesley endeavoured to prevail with Mr. B. to connect himself with his party, but the latter could not be induced to embrace his (Mr. W's.) ideas on Perfection.

Mr. Ingham did not remain long in Germany, and on his return continued his labours with increasing success. Their increase of labourers and converts, roused the jealousy of the established Clergy, who had recourse to the most violent means to repress their labours. † They frequently instigated the rabble to abuse, and even to mob them, and such was their violence, that their lives were frequently in the most eminent danger. This was about 1752, and for some time subsequent, these persecutions still increased in frequency and with unabating violence; but, these things did not abate their zeal, and they continued to extend their labours. At this period they preached at York, Thirsk, Selby, Leeds, Aberford, Settle, Tadcaster, Bradford, Wibsey, Longpreston, Salterforth, Grindleton, Barnoldswick, Newby, &c. in the county of York: at Colne, Winewall, Wheatley, Barrowford, Watermeetings, in the County of Lancaster; and at Kendal, Thinoaks, Grayriggs, Dent, Gale, Roundthwaite, Burtree, Kirby-Stephen, Brackenber, &c. &c. in the County of Westmoreland. They also occasionally preached at various places in Lincolnshire.

At most of these places Societies were formed, which were supplied with itinerant preachers once a week, or once a fortnight. The following extract from their journals will shew their manner of admitting persons into their Society. "The person to be admitted to apply either to the preachers, or some of the Society, if no objection be made, the person to be received without making any promise or subscribing any rules or orders. They

* November 12th 1741, Mr. Ingham Married the Right Honourable Lady Margaret Hastings, Sister to the Earl of Huntingdon.

† Mr. Allen united with them about this time, 1752.

are at liberty to leave the Society whenever they please, but to be faithfully told, that so long as they profess to be members of the Society, it is expected that they have their salvation at heart, and live and walk as become the followers of Jesus Christ. If any member shall give offence by acting contrary to his profession, the Stewards are authorized to take notice thereof and inform the preachers. If the nature of the fault will allow it, the person for the first time is only to be affectionately admonished, but if that do not produce repentance, he is then to be reproved before two or three of the Stewards, or preachers, if he still remain impenitent, he is to be publicly rebuked or disowned as the fault requires. In some of the Societies there is a collection made, to which every member subscribes Two Pence per month, if they be able and willing. This money is collected by the Stewards not for the preachers, but to pay incidental expenses belonging to the Society, such as candles, &c." In addition to this we find that when they could not agree about the admission of a member it was determined by lot. The person who wished to be admitted, stated his experience publicly before the congregation.

Most of their Meeting-houses were built about this time. The foundation of one at Wheatley was laid May the 1st, 1750. That at Rothwell, April 3rd, 1754. That at Dent, April 10th, 1754. And that at Salterforth, was also built this year. The foundation of that at Winewall, July 18th, 1752. That at Birks, 8th of March, 1757. And also one at Burton, 26th of March, 1757.

It has been before observed that there is no circumstantial account of their order to be found, it appears to have varied as they varied in their views of doctrine. We find when they had made a few prosolytes these were formed into a Society, and a Steward or Stewards appointed over them, and these Societies were visited by the itinerant preachers who were a kind of General Rulers or Elders. On the admission of a member into the Societies he received a ticket, which gave him admittance to their meetings, which were very numerous, consisting of General Meetings, Lovefeasts, Choir Meetings for Men, and Choir Meetings for Women, &c. &c. At one of their General Meetings holden at Winewall, December 30, 1753, Mr. Ingham gave the following letter of advice to all his fellow labourers.

"In preaching, keep to your own gift and experience, and do not go beyond your own depth. Avoid all affectation in words and gestures, and endeavour to express yourselves in plain Scriptural language. In the first place, preach Christ crucified, as the only foundation; let his godhead, blood and righteousness, be the chief topics of your discourses. In the next place preach such points of doctrine as are essential to faith and practice, as the corruption and weakness of man's nature, the insufficiency of his own righteousness. The necessity of God's Holy Spirit to call, enlighten, convince, and convert sinners, justification and sanctification as inseparable; for where Christ's righteousness is imputed, his life, spirit, and nature is imparted.

Preach repentance, and obedience, as concomitants of true faith, and good works as the fruit thereof. Denounce curse, wrath, and damnation, against all wicked, wilful, impenitent sinners; and proclaim grace, mercy, and salvation to all penitent, humbled, and broken-hearted sinners, that come to the Lord Jesus Christ: wave all nice and controverted points, which tend only to gender strife and disputing; labour not to make a wise knowing people, but a happy lively people. Lay the axe to the root of the tree, and declare roundly and boldly that nothing but an experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ in the heart can make us happy, either here or hereafter. Exhort people to the constant use of praying, watching, meditating, reading the scriptures, hearing sermons and meeting together.

Tell believers that when they are faithful and obedient in heart and life, they will enjoy, though not all times equally alike, fellowship with God, the light of his countenance and the consolations of the Holy Spirit. But that if they neglect their duty, and act contrary to it, they must expect to suffer loss, and to smart for it, unfaithfulness in heart always produces confusion, darkness, and uneasiness of mind; and wilful disobedience, shame and chastisement, for sin is a real evil, and God will not suffer it in any people. Be an example to the people, in all your behaviour, because preaching without example has no good effect; avoid idleness, lightmindness, jesting, loud laughter, and all vain and unprofitable conversation. Do not carry much news from place to place. Do not speak against either the people or preachers of other parties. Do not expose other people's faults, or speak of them unless necessary for some good end. Do not keep people talking about worldly affairs and news, after meetings are over, because it is best for them to go immediately home. Read the Scriptures, sing and pray with the people where you lodge. Visit and pray with the sick when desired: and be always ready to speak with people about their souls concerns. Endeavour to give the people where you lodge or come to as little trouble as possible, and do not keep them up late at nights. Remember that we are not to be Lords over God's Heritage, but helpers of their joy. Endeavour to support and defend your fellow labourers, and never think to establish your own character upon the ruin of others. Honesty is the best policy, and he that walks and acts most uprightly before the Lord, will stand the longest and come best through at last."

About 1760 Mr. Sandeman's Letters on Theron and Aspasia, and Mr. Glass' testimony of the King of Martyrs, were perused by Mr. Ingham and some of the preachers in his connexion. These works led them to suspect their present practices in the order and discipline of their Societies; and they perceived that they were not agreeable to the word of God. At the desire of Mr. Ingham two of his preachers Messrs. W. Batty and Allen, went into Scotland to visit Messrs. Glass and Sandeman, to hear their doctrines and to observe the order of their Societies. They were received by these gentlemen with the greatest cordiality, and

the most marked attention. This rendered their interview very pleasant, and they received much useful information from them.

September 7th, 1761, Mr. Sandeman, writing to a Mr. Churchill, informs him of the visit of Messrs. Batty and Allen. He says, "The Yorkshire men who were both preachers of long standing, staid with us more than eight days. I went with them to Perth, Dunkeld and Dundee, the longer we were acquainted, we were the fonder of each other; Mr. Glas was very much pleased with them. They brought a very affectionate letter, with five guineas, from Mr. Ingham, who is the chief leader in raising the profession of the faith in Yorkshire, and in the neighbouring counties. Scattered in a circuit of about five hundred miles, they have about one thousand five hundred people, who appear to love their doctrine, and have separated themselves from the church of England. They have formed three churches; they have Elders; they receive members by the laying on of hands; they have the kiss of charity, and the feast of charity; they have the Lord's supper once a month, or so; but Mr. Ingham has been pressing to have it every Lord's day."* Mr. Sandeman in another letter to a friend makes the following observations: "I understand at Colne, in Lancashire, there is a society formed or forming themselves into church order, being united together by the same view of the gospel maintained in Scotland. They are in connexion with Messrs. Ingham, Batty and Allen, from Yorkshire, who occasionally visit them." It appears to have been the intention of Mr. Ingham, some years previous to this, to form the societies under his care into some regular order with Elders or preachers and teachers over each; but they found so great a difficulty in obtaining proper persons qualified for the office, that he, with his fellow labourers, concluded they would continue the Itinerant plan a while longer. They appealed to the Scriptures of Truth in what they considered matters of faith and practice; but in the order and discipline of a church they seem to have had no just views; but, like many other dissenters, imagined that the plan and regulation of a church was not determined in the word of God, but might be altered or modified as situation and circumstances required, and what appeared to them most likely to promote the glory of God and the good of the people. If we once admit this sentiment, it will follow that every plan of church government must be right: how awful the consequence which must follow! But from this time being led to see more clearly the true nature of Christ's kingdom, they were more consistent in the doctrines they preached, and renouncing human wisdom, began to submit to the wisdom of God, and evidenced this by forming their churches agreeably to his word. Messrs. Ingham, Batty and Allen were all agreed that they had been erecting a church which could not be measured by God's word, and that it was necessary to set about, without delay, to new model the churches. This was a trying time, and required much patience and firmness of mind, for the alterations were opposed by many, and a difference arose between Mr. Ingham and Mr Allen about carrying them

* Christian Advocate, vol. 1. page 212, and 311.

into effect. December, 1761, at the conference at Thinoaks, Mr. Allen objected to the use of the lot, (which they had recourse to when unanimity could not be obtained), and, also to the Elders who had been chosen by lot, and disapproved of Mr. Ingham having so much authority granted to him, which no doubt were all unscriptural, but he made no objection to any point of doctrine. Mr. William Batty and many others used all means possible to preserve unity amongst themselves; for as they who were leaders and teachers were not brought to those present views all at once, Messrs. Ingham and Batty thought it necessary to proceed in changing the plan and government of the churches with a certain degree of forbearance. Mr. Allen was for an immediate and radical change, and this difference caused great uneasiness, disputation and dissension throughout the connexion. They were very desirous to preserve Mr. Allen amongst them, being possessed of great abilities as a preacher, beloved by the people, and whose moral conduct was irreproachable. However, all the intreaties of Mr. Batty and his friends proved ineffectual. This dispute produced a separation. Mr. Allen left Thinoaks and went the same evening to Robert Birkets, his brother-in-law's, at Newby, a few miles distant, who separated at the same time. There several persons met who were of the same views with themselves, and a while after this, Edward Gorriel, one of the preachers, united with them, and the year following they united with the Glassites in Scotland.* The people now fell into party zeal, and many spake warmly one against another, and altho' there was a great number of members in the different churches when the reformation took place, they were squandered some one way and some another, and many were offended and turned back to the world again. So the few who were left from this period assumed their present constitution and order. We shall now proceed to give a short sketch of each church, beginning with

The Church at Tadcaster.

The number of members at Tadcaster at this period 1762, when they were set in order, was forty-six. They chose Messrs. B. Ingham and W. Blades, Elders and Messrs. R. Wray and W. Ryther, Deacons, after their establishment they walked in love and unity some years. In the year 1766, W. Blades and a great part of the members left the church, when W. Blades returned into Wensleydale, his native place, and many who left with him made no more profession. This division left only seventeen members in the church, they continued about this number without any particular changes until 1772, when Mr. Ingham their remaining Elder died.† His loss

* It is worthy of observation, that when Mr. Allen left the Glassite churches his objections should exactly coincide with our own. See Christian Advocate, vol. 1. page 174.

† Mr. Ingham not only exerted himself to the utmost of his ability in preaching the gospel, but was very liberal in relieving the needy, which evinced his attention to the exhortation of the Apostle, 1 Tim. vi. 17 and 18. While he was Elder of the church at Tadcaster, he wrote a treatise on the faith and hope of the gospel. This work shews the views he had of divine truth in the latter part of his life. The following fact will illustrate the disinterestedness of Mr. Ingham and his fellow labourer in the ministry, Mr. Christopher Batty.

was much felt not only at Tadcaster but throughout the connexion. The church when deprived of its Elder continued united and met regularly on the Sabbath, the Deacons exercising their gifts for the edification of the body, and some few were added. In this state they continued until 1774, when their numbers were considerably augmented. A Mr. John Stapleton, a preacher amongst the Wesleyan Methodists, separated from them and with him many others. He began to hold Meetings at his own house on the week days, but on the Sabbath, attended the Meeting of the brethren at Tadcaster, and in a few weeks he and many of his hearers united with them. In 1775, W. Ryther and John Stapleton, were ordained Elders, and Robert Wray and Benjamin Wood, Deacons. The church now consisted of about forty-four members and they walked in peace and unity. In 1779 Mr. Ryther died, and the care of the church now devolved on Mr. Stapleton. In 1780 their numbers were increased to forty-nine. In this state they continued until 1791, when a very contentious spirit made its appearance. It originated in an individual, who conceived that some persons in easy circumstances, did not contribute sufficiently at the collections. On this he founded a charge of covetousness, and drew many over to his opinion. This unscriptural sentiment, the church opposed, but it caused a great breach and reduced their numbers to about twenty. On the 27th December 1794, Mr. J. Stapleton died, leaving the church without an Elder. They remained without for some time, but continued to meet together for mutual edification. Some of their aged members dying and few being added to them, their numbers were gradually diminishing.. In the year 1799, Messrs. B. Wood and G. Hollins were ordained Elders, and Messrs. John Naylor and Moses Robinson, Deacons, and these are the present officers of the church.

In the year 1771, Mr. C. Batty and his wife went on a visit to York. Mr. Batty having to go into Lincolnshire to preach, left Mrs. Batty with a Mr. Green of York, a person who lodged the preachers. On his return Mr. Green told him he had determined to leave him all his property, which amounted to 7 or 800l. And that he had a particular esteem for him, as he considered him instrumental in the conversion of his Daughter, who died the preceding year. Mr. Batty positively refused to accept his offer, thinking it might cause the enemies of Christ to speak reproachfully. On his refusal, Mr. Green was so affected that he shed tears. After this Mr. Green got an Attorney to make his will and left all his property to Mr. Ingham, and died soon after. His Heir-at-Law came to Mr. Ingham and threatened to commence an Action at Law against him for the property which Mr. Green had legally devised to him. The Attorney who made the will told Mr. Ingham, that he had not the least reason to fear, for he would defend him for a Shilling against the Heir-at-Law. Mr. Ingham however had no intention of keeping the property, and he told the man that if he would acknowledge the will was legal, and that he (Mr. Ingham) had a legal right to the property, and would ask him for it, he would give it to him. The man fell upon his knees, made the acknowledgement required and Mr. Ingham gave him the whole of the property.

The Church at Leeds.

In 1762 when the church at Leeds was set in order, it consisted of about thirty members. They chose John Wood Elder. They walked in peace for some years until their Elder by mixing with worldly company, fell into the crime of drunkenness. This conduct caused much distress to the church, who about the year 1774, excomunicated him for disorderly conduct. He was succeeded by John Sharp, a Joiner, who became guilty of the same crime, and shared the fate of his predecessor. The church after this was supplied with preachers from other churches in the connexion viz. Wibsey, Winewall, Wheatley, Salterforth, Tadcaster, &c. until 1779, when Samuel Towers began to preach and continued until 1793. Being embarrassed in his circumstances, he left his family and went to reside in some other part of the County. It was not long before he returned to his family in a weak state of health and died soon after. His conduct caused great dissension in the church. For many of the members were creditors, and sustained great loss by him. This dissension reduced their number to eight or nine who continued to meet together regularly on the Lord's day, to read the Scriptures and attend to social worship. They were visited occasionally by Elders and preachers in the connexion, and from 1799, they were seldom without a preacher or Elder on the Sabbath, until 1804, when Mr. Joseph Nicholson their present Elder resigned his office in the excise, and came to reside in Leeds. In 1806, Mr. J. Nicholson was ordained Elder over them. At that time they were about eight members. At present they are ten walking in peace and unity.

The Church at Howden.

Preachers in connexion with Mr. Ingham, had frequently visited Howden, and preached in the house of a Mr. Fearn, Draper, About the year 1784, Tempest Brown, then an Elder of a small church at Pately Bridge, Yorkshire, began to go there once in six weeks. In about two years from this time, Mr. John Briggs, their present Elder, and three or four more united together in the profession of the Gospel. Some time after T. Brown discontinued his visits, and they were occasionally supplied with preachers from different churches in the connexion until 1801, when I. Briggs and I. Goodworth were ordained Elders. In about four years from this time, John Goodworth withdrew from the church in consequence of a difference of opinion between him and his fellow Elder respecting the distinction in the Godhead. Since the church was planted they have lost about eight members by death, and about the same number otherwise. They are at present about ten members walking in peace and love.

The Church at Wibsey.

Little information is to be found respecting this church. In the old connexion their numbers were very considerable, but the

part of them disapproved of the changes and left off their attendance. The few that remained were formed into order agreeably to the word of God, about 1772. They have never been numerous. At present their numbers are according to the statement, and they are walking in unity and love.

The Church at Winewall.

In 1762, when the churches were formed into their present order, from twenty to thirty persons at this place approved of the alterations, and formed themselves into a church. They chose John Slinger, Elder, and Robert Waddington and James Walker, Deacons. They continued to walk in the obedience of the Gospel for a considerable time without many alterations, except a few additions. On the death of John Slinger, which happened about 1780, William Edmonson was chosen Elder. After some time the church chose James Bellhouse and Henry Bannister, Elders. In November, 1811, the church lost by death, James Bellhouse, and in October, 1813, William Edmonson. *

In 1766, a controversy arose in the connexion respecting the maintenance of the poor members. The question was whether they should receive what the national laws provided for their relief, or they should be wholly supported from the churches. The church at Winewall maintained the former, and the church at Wheatley, with which the controversy was principally carried on, the latter. This ended in the separation of the church at Winewall, for the other churches in the connexion were agreed with the church at Wheatley. This breach, however, was not of long duration, for the church at Winewall soon saw the subject in the same point of view.

This sentiment they endeavoured to put in practice, but found that there was not sufficient money given to support the poor comfortably, and as they considered that contributions were voluntary, and that they did not possess authority to compel any to give, the sentiment was again, in process of time, renounced by the churches in general. How changeable are men! How prone to error! How do these things enforce our Saviour's exhortation, *search the scriptures.*

* William Edmonson was a person highly esteemed throughout the connexion. The early part of his life he spent in the Army. He served under George 2nd as well as his present Majesty. He was at the seige and storming of Havannah in the Island of Cuba. On his discharge from the Army he had an opportunity of hearing the preachers in this connexion. He came to a knowledge of the Gospel through the instrumentality of John Slinger, and united with the Church at Salterforth in the profession of it. He soon became a zealous, active, and intrepid soldier of the great Captain of Salvation, and weilded the sword of the spirit with extraordinary decision against the prince of darkness. He was remarkable for his extraordinary spirit and decision of character. His conduct as a christain throughout his profession was very exemplary, and he died much lamented by his brethren.

The Church at Wheatley.

In 1762, this church, which consisted of from forty to fifty members, chose Messrs. William Batty and Ambrose Walton, Elders. In 1764, A. Walton resigned his office of Elder, on account of infant baptism, with which he was dissatisfied, but he continued a member of the church until 1766, when he began openly to defend his antipædobaptist principles, and twelve or fourteen members espoused the same sentiments. The church then considered it their duty to proceed to separate him and his party, which they accordingly did. This division brought many improper practices to light which had been kept concealed, and tended to the purging of the body. Some time after this separation, Mr. John Green was chosen Elder of this church. After continuing some time to discharge the duties of his office, he removed to Nottingham to take the oversight of a number of individuals there, who were desirous of uniting with this connexion in the profession of the gospel. In 1787, Mr. W. Batty, their remaining Elder died, much regretted by the church and the connexion.* Soon after the death of Mr. Batty, James M'Adden, who was a teacher in the church at Kendal, was invited to assist them in that capacity. He accepted their invitation, and after some time was chosen Elder. He continued in that capacity eleven or twelve years, when he became guilty of such conduct as rendered it necessary for the church to separate him.

About 1793, Thomas Hargreaves was chosen Elder of the church. He afterwards removed to Todmorden, where a small church had been recently planted. About the time J. M' Adden was expelled the church, he returned to his native place, and was again called to the Elder's office, in which he continued till his death, which happened in October, 1812. In February, 1813, John Whitaker and John Winterbottom were appointed to the Elder's office. The number of members from the establishment of the church have been generally from forty to sixty.

The Church at Salterforth.

In 1762, when this church was set in order, it consisted of from twenty to thirty members. They chose Joseph Edmonson and

* Though the former part of Mr. Batty's profession was spent in propagating sentiments inconsistent with the sacred records, after he came to be convinced of his error, he advocated the cause of divine truth with the greatest firmness and intrepidity. The doctrines he propagated, and the exemplary conduct he pursued, bore ample testimony that he was determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified. He was a most diligent and laborious preacher of the word of truth, and received no remuneration for his incessant labours; but the satisfaction arising from the performance of his duty, the pleasure of being instrumental in the calling of those that are sanctified in God the Father, and their edification in divine truth. May the great Lord of the harvest raise up many such labourers.

John Wood, Elders. On the decease of John Wood, the care of the church devolved on Joseph Edmonson, who became so addicted to drinking, that he was separated from the church. Being a principal Trustee of the Meeting-house, and having possession of the writings, he kept possession of it, and continued to preach while any would attend. In consequence of these disagreeable things the church was broken up. Some of the members united with other churches, some continued attached to him, and others gave up their profession. After some time, in 1805, he made an offer to deliver up the Meeting-house and writings, on condition of being allowed to live free of rent the remainder of his life, in the dwelling-house belonging to and adjoining the Meeting-house, which offer was accepted. The Meeting-house which was then almost in a state of ruin, was repaired, and a church consisting of about eight members was replanted. They chose John Preston and Henry Holgate, Elders. The former was separated from the church in 1813, but is now restored again as a private member. Since the re-establishment of the church they have progressively increased to their present number.

The Church at Todmorden.

From 1770, the preachers in connexion with Mr. Ingham, occasionally preached at Todmorden, and in the neighbourhood, but no church was formed until about 1792, when a few united in the profession of the gospel. Thomas Hargreaves, who was at that time an Elder in the church at Wheatley, with the consent of the church removed to Todmorden, and after some time was chosen to the same office there. He continued there about four years, when circumstances rendered it necessary for him to return to his native place. Abraham Barker was chosen his successor. The number of members about this period might be about twenty. On the death of A. Barker, John Helliwell and John Sutcliffe were appointed Elders. The latter, at the time of his appointment, professed himself an antipædopaptist, but promised that he would not disturb the church with his sentiments on that subject; but he violated his promise, and began to rebaptize adults. In consequence of this conduct he was excluded the church; and all the members, with the exception of five or six, followed him. In the beginning of the year 1813 their remaining Elder died, and in February, 1814, Messrs. A. Aspden, and N. Foulds were appointed to that office.

The Church at Haslingden.

About 1805, a few persons at this place, who had an opportunity of hearing the preachers in this connexion, signified their intention to unite with our brethren in the profession of the gospel. They were principally persons who had been united with the Independents of this place, and had become dissatisfied with their doctrine

and order. They have never had officers, but continue to meet together every Lord's day for the observance thereof, and their mutual edification.

The Church at Kendal.

In 1762, when this church, which was not very numerous, was set in order, they chose Thomas Rawnson, Elder. He was succeeded by Messrs. C. Batty, and W. Wilson. Under their care the church increased in the knowledge of divine truth, and in the number of its members. After the decease of those pastors, John Huck was called to the Elder's office. Since that period, they have had various cases of discipline. Many have been excommunicated, and others have left the church. Of late they have been on the increase, and are walking in unity and love.

The Church at Rothwell.

It appears probable that this church would be set in order along with the other, but there is no certain information respecting it. They had James Hartley, who had been a preacher in the old connexion, for their Elder. He died some years ago, and since that period their members, who were never very numerous, have been decreasing. At present they have no officers, but are occasionally supplied with preachers from the churches at Salterforth, Wheatley and Winewall.

The Church at Nottingham.

About 1774, a few persons who were dissatisfied with the doctrine and preaching of the Independents, in Nottingham, withdrew from them. As none of them were public teachers, they were desirous of procuring a person in that capacity whose views coincided with their own, and hearing of a Mr. Molesworth, a person of an honourable family, who resided in Yorkshire, and preached to a few people at a village called Thornhill, they invited him over. They were so well satisfied with his doctrines that he remained with them for some time, until his conduct became so inconsistent with his profession, that they could not in conscience continue to countenance him. They were never united as a church under him. In 1786, their present Elder, John Green, was invited from the church at Wheatley. The following year a church was formed consisting of eight members. It progressively increased till 1804, when a number of members who resided at Bulwell, a village about four miles from Nottingham, having an opportunity of forming themselves into a church there, they were dismissed from this church with cordiality. This separation reduced the number of members to about thirty, about which number they continue.

The Church at Bulwell.

It has been observed that several members of the church at Nottingham, resided at Bulwell. As the distance to Nottingham was so great as to render it very inconvenient to attend regularly, Mr. Fleetwood Churchhill, a member of the church at Nottingham, was in the practice of preaching occasionally in Bulwell. This was a means of increasing their number, and they considered it most expedient to form themselves into a church. They chose Mr. F. Churchhill, Elder. Two or three years after, their present Elder was called to the office. In 1811, the church sustained a great loss in the death of their beloved pastor Mr. F. Churchhill. * This church has never been much more numerous than at present.

Besides these churches, others have been in existence. There was one at Thinoaks, another at Birks, in Westmorland, another at Pately Bridge, Yorkshire. But he who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks has seen it proper to remove them. May the churches, and the individuals of which they are composed, learn instruction from these awful events. May we be holding fast that whereunto we have already attained! May we be pressing forward to the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus! May we recollect that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. So that we may be looking forward and hasting to the coming of the day of God! And may the language of our hearts be: come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

* Mr. F. Churchhill was a person much beloved and highly esteemed throughout the connexion. He was diligent and zealous in his labours in the word and doctrine. Imitating the noble example of the great apostle of the gentiles, his labours were gratuitous. He frequently visited the churches in Lancashire, where his presence diffused the greatest joy, and great numbers flocked to his ministry. Though descended from what the world esteems noble ancestors, and moving in what is considered a respectable sphere in society, he evinced his attention to the apostolic exhortation, condescend to men of low estate; for he associated with the greatest freedom and familiarity with the poorest of the brethren. Though his labours were without remuneration, he was liberal in the relief of the necessitous, and in the support of the cause of divine truth. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, even so saith the spirit, for they rest from their labours and their works do follow them.

CORRESPONDENCE.

J. Pearson to David Hill, Edinburgh.

KENDAL, July 7th, 1813,

Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure of now addressing a few lines to one of whom with his connexion I have for a considerable time entertained the most favourable opinion. Perhaps it will be with no small degree of surprise you learn the object of this communication; though it be from one you have known for a considerable time, and with whose religious profession you are not altogether unacquainted. I have been at our Conference, held at Wheatley on the 17th and 18th of June, and since that time have had a journey through many of the churches in our connexion. I named to the brethren a people in the north, which, so far as I had access to know, agreed with us on the doctrines and kingdom of Jesus. The general opinion was, that if we are really one in that truth which has united Christians together in one body from the beginning, we ought to open a communication by letter, to ascertain each others views of revealed truth, and its practical influence or effect in the government of the churches. I am desired by the churches therefore to open a correspondence, with no less an object in view than the union of the two bodies; and to state to you what has appeared to be essential points, touching doctrine and practice, and are now regarded as such by this body of people, and which if preserved by the head of the church no object could lead them to disavow; and not being acquainted with any Elder in your connexion but yourself, I now communicate to you the mind of this people, which if you as a body approve of, I hope you will lose no time in making known to your churches the object we have in view, that they may appoint a correspondent to reply to

this, stating the favourable or unfavourable view in which this our first epistle is received.

We trust our only object in this attempt is the glory of God, and the present and future happiness of Christians: if therefore your reply encourage a second epistle, it shall contain in brief the important subjects before hinted at, and for which we judge it our duty and interest earnestly to contend.

I apprehend your churches to be something like ours, neither many nor large; yet it is presumed a considerable time must elapse before you can favour us with a reply.

In the interim remember me affectionately to your aged brother whom I have seen in the flesh, your wife, and in short all the church.

I am with respect affectionately yours

JOHN PEARSON.

Extract of a Letter from David Hill, Edinburgh, to James M'Gavin Paisley.

EDINBURGH, 13th July, 1813.

Dear Brother,

On Saturday last I received a letter from an unexpected quarter, viz. Kendal, from a Mr. John Pearson, member of a church there, whose views and practice correspond with our own. I have had several interviews with him when here on business: he attended us one Lord's day, and appeared satisfied with what he saw and heard. I understand he has been visiting the churches in his connexion, and has mentioned to them a people in the north, of whom he highly approves in doctrine and order. He has been instructed to open a correspondence with the churches in our connexion, and being acquainted with me has written to that effect. I read his letter to the church here, which gave great joy to all the brethren.—I am desired to send letters to our sister churches, to inquire if they be inclined to correspond with them. Should this meet our approbation, they promise to send us their views of doctrine and practice. If an union takes place,

it certainly must give joy to the disciples of Jesus Christ. Our Lord, in the days of his flesh, prayed that his disciples might be one, that the world might believe that he was sent of the Father. Surely when we see advances towards this object taking place. we should meet them as far as the truth will admit. If you, as a body, approve of writing them, what would you think of you, or some Glasgow friends, carrying on the correspondence? I have no doubt but it would meet with the good will of all the churches.

James M'Gavin to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 22nd July, 1813.

Mr. John Pearson,

Sir,

By a letter from our friend Mr. David Hill, Edinburgh, we are informed that you and the brethren with you in the Christian fellowship, wish a correspondence opened with us, and those churches in connexion with us, in the view of forming an union. I have submitted this request to the church in this place, in which I officiate as an Elder, and I have it in trust to say, that we joyfully embrace the opportunity to give you a short detail of our faith, hope, and practice, and desire the same in return from you.

As we understand you have had an opportunity of hearing and conversing with some of our brethren in Edinburgh, I shall be very concise in detail.

1st. We receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the word of God; and that these two Testaments (not singly, but as united) are the only rule of faith and practice.

2d. As taught in these oracles, we profess to believe, that by the first man's disobedience all are become guilty before God, and are so constituted by the imputation of his one offence, as well as by our own actual transgressions against the royal law of God, which requires a perfection of Godliness and humanity—hence are naturally under its curse; and that "by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified" in his sight.

3d. That the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God equal with the Father, was "born of a woman, and was made under the law, to re-

deem them who were under the curse of the law;"— that "he was made a curse in bearing our sins in his own body;"—that "sin was imputed to him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners;"—that in the work the Father gave him to do, as his righteous servant, he "obeyed the law as our surety, and made atonement for sin in his divine blood;"—that in his obedience unto death, he magnified the law, and made it honorable, and brought in an everlasting righteousness"—and our assurance of the truth of this rests in the Father's raising him from the dead, and giving him glory and honour at his own right hand; thus testifying that he is well pleased, and requires no more offering for sin.

4th. That by the work of the Lord Jesus, all who believe are justified from all things;—that we are not justified on account of crediting God's testimony concerning his Son, but by his righteousness alone; and that it is given on the behalf of Christ to believe, so that faith is only the channel through which the divine righteousness is imputed to the ungodly, just as they are—guilty criminals—and that on the footing of sovereign mercy, and according to the election of grace, viz. that God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he passeth by.

5th. That the Holy Spirit, who is equal with the Father and the Son, is the grand agent in teaching of sin and of righteousness;—that his operations, both in conversion and in leading to a life of holiness, are only by means of the written word. Almighty power keeps through the faith unto salvation: the perseverance of the saints is thus secured; for whom the Lord loves, he loves unto the end.

6th. Such being our faith, we profess to have our hope for eternal life resting on the one thing needful alone, the sole requisite for justification; and although called to a life of conformity to the image of God's dear Son, without which no man shall see the Lord: yet this does not in any respect form part of our acceptance before him; it justifies our faith, as being of the operation of God, to the praise of his glory.

7th. Our hopes reach forth to the second coming of the Lord from heaven, to change our vile bodies, and fashion them like to his glorious body, and so to be ever with the Lord.

8th. We profess to hold fast our Lord's good confession, that his kingdom is not of this world, (though in part *in* the world ;) that a church of Christ is subject to no jurisdiction under heaven, not under law even to those who are members one of another; (although by love they are to serve one another,) but under law to him who is the head of the body and sole law-giver in his own kingdom: and with respect unto the subjects of his kingdom, we view infants as comprehended, so we receive such by baptism; and

9th. We profess to keep the ordinances as they are delivered to us, by (every Lord's day) continuing stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine (in reading, preaching, and exhorting, either by the Elders or other male members) in fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers: the prayers also both by the Elders and other brethren.

To the above I may add—All persons, male or female, applying for admission, have to profess the faith before the church. We are in the practice of observing the kiss of charity in receiving members, or brethren visiting us from a distance. We do not decide on any question affecting the faith and obedience of the gospel by majorities. We plead for the propriety of a plurality of Elders or Teachers, and those to be chosen from among the brethren; but I think I may say, that we see it our duty, even though deprived of pastors, not to cease to observe all the ordinances of Christ's appointment. And lastly, we admit none to transient fellowship, none but those who shew a readiness to submit to the discipline of the Lord's house, and go along with us in observing his commandments, according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Thus have I given you, as shortly as the nature of the case will admit, an account of our faith and practice, and shall be very glad how soon you may find it convenient to communicate your views to us, which, if they be in unison, will afford us much satisfaction. Mr. Hill's letter only stated, that you wished to know if we were willing to open a correspondence with you: this has not only been considered agreeable, but also that it is the shortest way at once to communicate our sentiments, without waiting for yours. Expecting these in return,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant

JAMES M'GAVIN, Merchant.

John Pearson's Answer.

KENDAL, August 5th, 1813.

Dear Sir,

YOUR acceptable letter arrived here on Saturday night, which gave me an opportunity of reading the contents to the church assembled on the Lord's day. I feel at a loss how to express to you the joyful satisfaction this church derived from the scriptural statement you have given us of the faith, hope, and practice, as professed and contended for in your connexion. We believe they have a foundation in the word of God, and that to walk in them is to walk in the truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

I remark, 1st. That we disavow all human legislation in whatever concerns religious matters, conceiving it our incumbent duty to appeal to the Scriptures, the words of inspiration, as the only infallible standard of faith and practice.

2d. From this Revelation we perceive the justice, holiness, and sovereignty of God, from the laws therein promulgated, and these divine perfections appear to us practically illustrated in the Garden of Eden and Mount Sinai: at the first we see ourselves lost in Adam, and from the second that our mouths are stopped, being actual transgressors of this one most holy and righteous law of God, and are justly exposed to the denounced curse. We believe therefore that it cannot *convey life* nor the beginnings of life to any of the Sons of Adam; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

3. From the same divine records we perceive the love, mercy, and grace of God, manifested to an ungodly world, and especially in giving his dear Son, who is Jehovah, the church's righteousness. We see light spring up before the sons of darkness when the word took flesh, when Immanuel, God with us, made himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto death, as the servant of his Father and the Saviour of men. We doubt not but that Scripture was fulfilled (Isa. xlii. 21) by the holy life and spotless sacrifice of the Son of God, which said "he will magnify the law, and make it honorable;" as also that the Lord is well pleased for the sake of that righteousness, and that only. The law had de-

clared the necessity of a perfect righteousness to appear in before God, as also that where mercy is exercised towards sinners, it must be in strict consistency with consummate justice; and the gospel which reveals the perfect work of God our rock, is the only truth that can shew us the just God and the Saviour.

4th. That the eternal God determined to glorify his perfections in the salvation of an innumerable number of sinners, and for this end personally chose them in his Son before the world began, and this to the praise and glory of his sovereignty; such only are called by him out of darkness by his word and spirit to know his name, as revealed in the face of Jesus, for whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, which may include calling, justifying, and glorifying. We believe that all these shall know him, from the least to the greatest: for such only the Lamb hath died, and for their justification hath arisen and ascended to prepare a place for them, where he lives to make intercession, and will continue to the time of the restitution of all things, or till the last member be gathered into his fold. Of this one redeemed body the Apostle speaks, saying, "Who shall lay any thing to their charge? who shall condemn? who shall separate?" and the context shews that no created existence hath power to destroy even the weakest of them; for God is determined to save them, and they shall never perish. The reason the Apostle gives for their certain salvation is, "he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for them all, how shall he not with him also freely give them all things."

5th. From this our view of Scripture, we believe they are brought to inherit glory, only in the right of Jesus, for all the promises of God are in him Yea, and in him Amen, from the mouth of every child of God, to the glory of the one Jehovah. To this privilege the Apostle says "we have access by faith unto this grace; for before this they were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and were children of wrath as others; but now, being found of him (not him of them) who had loved them with an everlasting love, in loving kindness he draws them; they hear his voice, believe the gospel, and are made to live:" such are justified, regenerated, born of the spirit and incorruptible seed; born of God, and shall overcome the world.

6th. This truth concerning Jesus we profess as the only ground for hope of eternal life, and the only bond of our union as a church, and profess to love one another for this truth's sake. We come together on the first day of the week to preach the word, exhort one another, and read the Scriptures; also to break bread, collect for our poor brethren, attend to discipline, if necessary, accompanying all with prayer and praise.

7th. We judge a plurality of Elders necessary to a church being set in order, but do not possess them in all the churches. The Elders are chosen from among the brethren.

8th. We attend to the kiss of charity every first day of the week in this church; but some in the plan only on receiving members, and visitors from the sister churches. We admit adult members into fellowship by confession of the truth before the church, and infants by baptism.

And lastly, every subject of an immoral or heretical nature brought before the church is concluded and disposed of by the Scripture rules, and with the approbation of the whole church. We consider that no one church hath any warrant from the Scripture to interfere in the discipline of another in the same connexion, but may advise by letter or otherwise, and this is as far as we go.

And now, Sir, I conclude with requesting that if you find any matter which I have omitted to introduce, or others that require explanation, you will favour me with your thoughts in an open and faithful manner; and in the interim

I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN PEARSON.*

Alexander Peterkin to John Pearson.

GLASGOW, 22nd July, 1813.

Mr. John Pearson,

Sir,

I had a letter last week from Mr. David Hill of Edinburgh, in which he states that you are connected with a church in Kendal, whose doctrines and practice are similar to those in our

* This and the preceding letter were formerly printed and circulated throughout the churches in England, and some few copies sent into Scotland.

fellowship, and that there are in England several churches of the same views connected with yours. Mr. Hill's letter was read to the church last Lord's day, and it gave great joy to the brethren to learn that so many were reserved in England, by the power of God, to himself, from bowing in their worship to the idols of the day. I was desired to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Hill's letter, and to say what pleasure its contents gave to the church here; and I beg leave by the church's desire to state a few things respecting the doctrines which are most surely believed by us, and the practices connected with the belief of these doctrines: this I do merely by way of commencement of the correspondence which will be carried on by abler hands.

The churches in our connexion, about fourteen, are all one as to their views of the faith, hope, and love of the gospel, and of the nature of Christ's kingdom, as not being of this world. As churches we are uniform in our public worship and practice, having the truth as the centre of union, and bond of love, professing to be ruled by the word of God in all things, as brethren in Christ Jesus; having no creed but the Scriptures of truth, and acknowledging no authority in the worship of God, or matters of conscience, but Jesus Christ, as the one Lord and lawgiver of his people, whose voice they are to hear, and whom they are to follow through good and through bad report. We own or acknowledge none to be brethren, or disciples of Christ, but such as appear to know the truth, and profess subjection to the same: but on any appearing to understand the saving truth, we receive them into fellowship as brethren in Christ, without any regard to their former character or practice (see 1 Cor. vi. 11) knowing that to whom the grace of God brings salvation, it will also teach them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and also lead them out to live righteously, soberly, and godly in the world, the faith of the gospel being a most holy faith; it works by love, and purifies the heart; and where this is not the case, we think all pretensions to being the children of God are vain; for an apostle saith, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." And while we admit of nothing as the ground of a sinner's hope before God, but the finished work of Christ, yet we maintain that faith in the

blood of Christ will always purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living and true God; and thus we are to evidence or shew the truth of our faith by our works; that we are Christ's disciples indeed, in distinction from those who only call him Lord with the mouth, but are not careful to do the things which he commands. Hence we maintain that the faith and obedience of the gospel are inseparably connected together; so that all who are savingly taught of God, will love, fear, and obey him who first loved them. Hence we judge of a person's continuing in the faith by his continuing in the obedience of the gospel.

We receive member's on a public profession of their faith before the whole church, which if satisfactory, after praying for them, we give them the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity.

On the first day of the week, or the Lord's day, we assemble to praise God for the wonders of redeeming love, and to thank him for his mercies, to read his holy word as an ordinance of his appointment, to attend to exhortation and doctrine, to observe the dying command of Jesus, to keep up the remembrance of his death and sufferings, and to contribute to the necessity of the poor saints; all of which we see expressly enjoined on the disciples of Jesus. In matters of discipline, when offences take place, we follow the rule laid down by our Lord in the 18th chapter of Matthew.

Mr. Hill will be able to supply the deficiency of my statement, and I have reserved a page of my letter for that purpose. Any thing else, which you, or any connected with you, may wish to be more particularly informed respecting, shall be most readily complied with. In return we will expect to have a summary of your views, doctrine, and practice. In the mean time

I am, Sir, yours, in all dutiful respects,

ALEXANDER PETERKIN,

Royal Bank, Glasgow.

John Pearson's Answer.

KENDAL, August 6th, 1813.

Dear Sir,

YOUR letter came duly to hand, and from the nature of its contents am happy to say we perceive a striking similarity of re-

ligious principle, when compared with the judicious statement transmitted by Mr. M'Gavin from Paisley. Divine truth, that celestial visiter to sinful mortals, is the same consistent record in the minds and conversation of all them that are taught of God, whether little children, young men, or fathers. In this the prophet's prediction is amply fulfilled—"All thy children shall be taught of the Lord;" hence the testimony of the good Shepherd, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me.

In this letter I do not intend to write a particular statement of our faith and practice, as that is already done in an epistle to Mr. James M'Gavin of Paisley; copies of which will be sent by that gentleman in a short time to all your churches.

I shall conclude this letter by stating a few particulars, on which it is presumed all the children of God are of one mind:—And first, they admit that sin is the transgression of the law;—that Adam sinned, and all in him; so death passed upon all because of that one offence;—that the carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the divine law, nor can be while in a state of irreconciliation; that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, to suffer the just for the unjust; by which obedience unto death he hath redeemed from the curse of the law, and consecrated a new and living way through his propitiatory sacrifice; so that God is just whilst grace reigns through the righteousness of Jesus unto everlasting life;—that righteousness is imputed to men without human works, even to the chief of sinners believing the record which God hath given of his Son, and they are justified from all things; having passed from death unto life, they shall not come into condemnation;—that faith is the gift of God, though it be nothing more than the belief of the divine testimony; for it is written, Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father, &c. Matt. xvi. 17; and again, Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ to believe on him, Phil. i. 29: this faith purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and leads to every good work. In the church at Jerusalem we have a pattern of the *house of God*, the pillar and ground of the truth; sinners called by the gospel into Christian fellowship with their bishops and deacons to continue stedfast in the apostle's doctrine of fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers,

Such a body has the truth as the bond of their union, and are commanded to love one another for the truth's sake. When any heresy or immoral practice appears in their number, they apply the Scripture rules for discipline, to preserve the purity of the church, and for the good of the offenders. As the gratification of any fleshly lust stands directly opposed to the grace of God, they are not to suffer sin upon a brother, but each of them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world. They judge it their duty and interest to keep all the ordinances as they appear in the New Testament; as the first day sabbath, baptism, the supper, fellowship, prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, preaching, exhortation, and discipline. Thus holding the faith, and walking in the love of the truth, they profess to be risen with Christ, and are looking for his second coming, that when he doth appear they may appear with him in glory.

Such is the hope of the people of God, and may we be found watching, with loins girded with truth, and lamps burning, so that the day of Christ may not overtake us as a thief.

I am, dear Sir, yours very respectfully

JOHN PEARSON.

John Pearson to James M'Gavin.

KENDAL, Sept. 22d, 1813.

Dear Sir,

By this you will see that our brethren at Colne have, for the sake of convenience in sending copies to the churches, printed the two letters, which copies I now send to you, expecting they may be acceptable. I have had a letter from the churches in the neighbourhood of Colne, requesting an explanation of that part of your letter where you say "I think I may say, that we see it our duty, though deprived of an Elder," &c. They ask if the churches in connexion with you hold it scriptural to attend to baptism and the supper without a pastor or pastors. I have given them all the information I possessed, which, if not satisfactory, I must write to you to give me the idea of the body upon this.

From the conversation I had with your Elders in Glasgow and other places, I understood this sentiment is not the general opinion of your body, but of a few individuals. Our churches are generally opposed to it, a few individuals excepted. Our brother Earnshaw, the Printer, wrote to me that the letters were particularly acceptable to three or four churches in their neighbourhood, except as above. They have a great desire to have one of your preachers to pay them a visit, and I am desired to ask the favor. His expences will be defrayed if necessary. Let me hear from you soon. In the mean time

I am, dear Sir, affectionately yours,

JOHN PEARSON.

James M'Gavin's Answer to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 28th Sept. 1813.

Dear Sir,

I shall be obliged if you can furnish me with a dozen or two of the printed copies, and send them down at your leisure. Perhaps you may have other parcels coming to Glasgow.

Respecting the subject of observing all the ordinances without Elders—had I suspected my letter was to have been circulated among the churches, either in your connexion or in ours, prudence would have directed me to withhold that expression; but of such publicity I had no idea, nor have I the least wish to raise the controversy. It is surely one of those things that may be borne with, at least betwixt churches The expression was uttered on my own individual responsibility, as you may observe by the way in which it is worded. Although I am fully of that opinion, and have every reason to believe I was correct, as it regards the church; yet I would be sorry to be obliged to take the church's mind upon it, as it would give the question such a formality as might endanger the peace of some of our sister churches, who, I know, are otherwise minded; and I apprehend it is soon enough, in many instances, to discuss questions, when it is intended to put them in practice, which is not the case, in this repect, with us at present. It unluckily fell to my lot to be the

chief instrument in this correspondence on this side the Tweed, which I regret only on the footing of inability to do it justice. I expected that the churches in our connexion would have all wrote to you in like manner as we did, i. e. upon their own footing. I have been anxiously awaiting the opinion of our sister churches to communicate to you; but as yet I have got letters only from four of them, all agreeable; but I intend to be more particular when the others are received.

It would afford me much pleasure, were it in my power to visit you and your friends in England, but it is not practicably consistent with duty. I propose, when writing to our brethren, to mention your desire in this respect: but I am not acquainted with any of our Elders who might incline to undertake this, unless it be Mr. Hill.

Please let the substance of this letter be made known to your churches in such a way as is most agreeable to yourself. With best respects to all with you,

I am, dear Sir, yours sincerely
JAMES M'GAVIN.

John Pearson to James M'Gavin.

KENDAL, October 14th, 1813.

Dear Sir,

YOUR acceptable letter was duly received, and I assure you its contents were very acceptable to the church here; and I doubt not but our distant brethren will derive equal satisfaction. I transmitted the contents to the church at Wine Wall, with a short commentary, which I have since heard, was well received by that church, and other brethren assembled there at the funeral of our much beloved Edmondson. It appears from all the information I have received that the sister churches in this country are favorable to the union. I am informed that letters have been received at Wine Wall from all the churches, except two, expressing their approbation with your views, and expect in a few days to be favoured with a general consent to our uniting in the bond of love.

I have procured the quantity of printed letters you requested,

and have inclosed them with a few sermons in a parcel of leather shipped for Mr. John Roxburgh of Glasgow. One of the Sermons inclosed in the parcel, was preached by W. Edmondson, who was last Monday week returned to the dust. He spent the former part of his life as a soldier, and fought in seven campaigns. He had many narrow escapes from death; but was preserved to fight the remainder of his life, which was about forty years, with the sword of the Spirit. He possessed superior talents, as a preacher, and was much respected by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. As a Christian he was much beloved by all the brotherhood; and though he is now dead, having finished his course on the earth, yet we hope he lives with Jesus, and is made partaker of an eternal weight of glory. Since the death of Mr. Churchill, one of the Nottingham Elders, we have lost three more: but all the four churches, I believe, have yet a plurality.

We should have been very glad to have seen you in this part; but perhaps Mr. Hill or some other person can make it convenient. The church in this place is not large; but I hope we are living in peace, which is far better. We meet together three times on the Lord's day, and are pretty well attended.

This country is of late very religious; but I am sorry to say of the imperfect kind. A perverted gospel is worse than no profession. Many would not love that doctrine where Christ is not preached, who nevertheless have no more need of him than to supply their little deficiencies. A person admitting the corruption of human nature, and the imputation of righteousness, and yet contending for this compound doctrine, is a demonstration of the wickedness and ignorance of the human heart, and our strong aversion to salvation by grace. The gospel, however is the only truth that discovers the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and is declared by the spirit of inspiration to be worthy of all acceptation, and is thus approved by every truly enlightened mind. May we be lead to hold fast this grace, through which we serve God acceptably; for we stand (if Christians) by faith. To have just views of the glorious person of God our Saviour, and his victory over death, as the head of his body the church, will lead us to glory only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with Paul shall be praying daily that we may be found in his righteousness,

and confessing that in our flesh there dwells no good thing. Give my kind love to all your brethren, and accept the same yourself.

Yours affectionately
JOHN PEARSON.

In consequence of the third and fourth Letters a Correspondence was commenced betwixt James M'Gavin and John Pearson, Copies of which being sent to those Churches in Scotland, commonly denominated OLD SCOTCH INDEPENDENTS :—*the following are Extracts from their Answers.*

Alexander Coutts to James M'Gavin.

PERTH, 10th Sept. 1813.

Dear Brother,

COPIES of your letter to Mr. Pearson and his answer were read to the Church here. We were much comforted on hearing our friends in England (for so we think we ought to call them) speak the same things with ourselves; from which we infer that they are taught by the same Spirit. So far as Mr. Pearson's statement goes, we do not observe him mention any thing regarding transient communion; as this is a rock upon which some that were in our connexion have already split, it would be proper to understand each others views respecting it. The practical influence of the truth is noticed in some particular instances; but it perhaps might have given additional satisfaction had he noticed the subject more expressly. On the whole we see no reason to doubt the correctness of their views as to these things, and are unanimously of opinion that an union between them and us should take place, if agreeable to themselves, upon such further remarks being made to them as the several answers of the churches may suggest. We would wish our proposed friends not to think that we are all of the same mind with you, on the subject of observing all the ordinances without Elders.

David Braig to Alexander Peterkin, Glasgow.

HAMILTON, 10th Sept. 1813.

My Dear Sir,

I now return you the copy of correspondence between Mr. M'Gavin and Mr. Pearson. The church here has agreed that an union should take place betwixt those churches in England and those in our connexion. We would rejoice to hear of more coming forward to the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel, and attending to him who saith, My kingdom is not of this world; and to follow him as dear children, and walk in love as he hath loved us.

William Robertson to Daniel Brodie, Glasgow.

EARLSFERRY, 11th Sept. 1813.

Dear Brother,

WE received a copy of a correspondence betwixt James M'Gavin and John Pearson, which was read in the church at Balchristy last sabbath. We were very unanimous in expressing our satisfaction with Mr. Pearson's letter; but we observe he passes over in silence the subject of occasional communion: perhaps it was an oversight, and we trust that our brother David Hill would have an opportunity of being satisfied in that particular. We rejoice in the fellowship of the gospel being extended, if in the truth and union of the spirit; so that it may tend to the furtherance of the gospel, and the peace, comfort, and edification of the churches, being helpers of one anothers joy.

William Stevenson to Alexander Peterkin.

NEW LANARK, 11th Sept. 1813.

My Dear Brother,

Having received a copy of the letters betwixt Mr. Pearson of Kendal, and Mr. M'Gavin of Paisley, we were not a little well pleased to hear of the success of the gospel, and of the pure simple views they have of the truth, and of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have resolved to hold fellowship with those people in England, in the profession of the gospel. Will you be

so good as to tell them so? and ask their prayers for us, and they may rest assured that we will not cease to implore fervently every blessing for them, and for their progress in a life of godliness.

Robert Annandale to James M'Gavin.

MARYKIRK, 20th Sept. 1813.

Very Dear Brother,

YOUR letter and Mr. Pearson's, copies of which were read to the church here on sabbath last, made us all glad. As we see no difference between them and us, we think it will be much for the comfort and edification of all concerned to agree to an union. Please to let us know when this takes place.

George Douglas to James M'Gavin.

ELIE, 20th Sept. 1813.

Sir,

MR. Pearson's letter, containing an account of the faith and practice of the churches with which he is connected, has been read to the church in Earlsferry. We rejoice much in the statement of the doctrine of Christ which it contains. We have therefore nothing to object to an union, and are ready to acknowledge such as brethren.

Thomas Hunter to James M'Gavin.

DUNDEE, 20th Sept. 1813.

Dear Brother,

WE were favoured with copies of two letters which have lately passed betwixt you and a Mr. Pearson of Kendal, each containing the faith, hope, and practice of the church under your care, and those connected with him. Upon perusing both the letters, we are very glad to find that such, we might almost say, a complete unanimity prevails betwixt these churches in England, and those in our connexion. Any shade of difference seems to be more in the mode of expression, than in the sentiment designed to be conveyed; and therefore we think not worth mentioning. More difference of opinion is often to be seen among

members of the same church, than we can discern in these two letters which contain the sentiments of churches situated at a considerable distance from one another, hitherto not in connexion; and therefore without an opportunity of learning from one another. May we not then justly infer, that both have been taught by the one spirit, and received their views from the same pure source, the Scriptures of truth. If the conduct of these churches correspond with their views of divine truth, we would have no objection to the proposed union. It is true, they may adopt the same language concerning the churches in our connexion; and if they express confidence in us with regard to this point, we are bound to do the same with them. But in continuing the correspondence, it might be useful to dwell a little more on this important particular.

We see from the Scriptures how liable churches are to decline and become corrupt, even while professing to hold the truth. It will avail little our professing to know the Lord, if in works we deny him. We hope better things of these churches, though we thus speak: but we think it may be useful to stir up their pure minds, by putting them in remembrance of these things; and in doing this to them, the benefit becomes mutual. The great Head of the church says to his disciples, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you; he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me;" and the apostle earnestly exhorts believers, saying, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ." Upon the whole then we see no good reason why an union should not take place; and in conducting this measure we wish that you may enjoy much of the counsel and guidance of him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and who walks amidst the seven golden candlesticks, to promote the best interests of his church and people.

It might be proper for Mr. Pearson in his next to mention the number of churches in his connexion, with the names of the office bearers, and the places where they reside. Could he also give us some account of the rise and standing of these churches? We think it would be very acceptable; for the more that we know of their history, the more we hope our confidence in them will increase. He may reasonably require the same information from you.

William Whyte to Daniel Brodie.

LINKS OF KIRKCALDY, 4th Oct. 1813.

Dear Brother,

WE were favoured with a copy of Mr. M'Gavin's letter and Mr. Pearson's answer, and are satisfied that both are a plain and simple statement of the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel. We see nothing to hinder an union, and are happy to find the children of God walking in the truth, as they have received a commandment from the Father.

Robert Gray to James M'Gavin.

GLASGOW, 13th Oct. 1813.

Dear Brother,

YOUR and Mr. Peterkin's correspondence with Mr. Pearson of Kendal, have been read to the church in this place, and they request me to convey to you their hearty approbation of the sentiments contained therein. The church desires that you will say to Mr. Pearson, that they rejoice to hear of the power of the truth in so many they have not seen in the face; and their sincere desire is to hold communion with these churches in his connexion, in the matters of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Their prayer is, that these churches, as well as those in this part of the Island, may walk in the fear of the Lord, the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and be multiplied.

When you write to Mr. Pearson perhaps it might be proper to request him to send you the names of the places, and the counties where the different churches are situated; and if he can have some guess of their numbers respectively, with the names of the Elders, and their worldly occupations. I think it would be proper also to inform him of the London church, which we have not yet informed of this matter; but I intend to do it the first time I write to Mr. Tilloch.

Charles Miller to James M'Gavin.

METHVEN, 18th Oct. 1813.

Dear Brother,

I have to inform you that a copy of your correspondence with Mr. Pearson was handed us from Perth some weeks ago, and

which was read in the hearing of the church in this place: it produced an agreeable surprise and joy amongst the brethren. We trust we may say with the apostle, "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for them since the day we heard of their faith in Christ Jesus, and their love to all the saints, that they might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."

(End of the Extracts.)

LIST OF THE CHURCHES, &c. ABOVE MENTIONED.

Place.	*Shire.*	*Number of Members.*	*Elders' Names and Designations.*
Perth	Perth	about 30	Alexander Coutts, Salesman.
Dundee	Angus	—— 40	James Donald, Manufac. & Thos. Hunter, Merch.
Kirkcaldy	Fife	—— 6	Wm. Whyte and David Alexander, Weavers.
Balchristy	Do.	—— 30	Henry Mitchell and Wm. Robertson.
Earlsferry	Do.	—— 25	George Douglas.
New Lanark	Lanark	—— 12	None.
London City		—— 8	None.
Hamilton	Lanark	—— 30	David Craig, Agent, and John Corbet, Tailor.
Edinburgh City		—— 20	David Hill, Merchant.
Glasgow	Lanark	—— 185	Wm. Kelly, Rob. Gray, & Wm. Kerr, Merchants.
Marykirk	Angus	—— 20	Robert Annandale, Mason.
Methven	Perth	there are 11	Charles Miller, Grocer.
Paisley	Renfrew	——— 84	James M'Gavin, Merchant.

James M'Gavin to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 23d Oct. 1813.

Dear Sir,

YOUR letter of the 5th of August last, in reply to mine of the 22nd July, was, on the first day of the week, after receipt, read to the church here. The brethren were much gratified in perceiving so exact a similarity betwixt your views and their own; and having nothing further to ask, they only awaited the agreement of our sister churches to hold out to you and your friends the right hand of fellowship, which we now do, in the expectation that you will accept. I feel myself particularly gratified in having to record so much harmony amongst our connexions on this important subject, as you will perceive from the preceding extracts. You will, however, observe that the churches at Perth, Balchristy, and Dundee, would have been glad if you had said something on the subject of occasional communion, and been more full on the fruits of the gospel. According to Mr. Hunter's suggestion, I shall now dwell a few moments on the latter.

That which I formerly stiled *the law of godliness and humanity*, is the law which we have broken, and by nature were under its curse. In this state, no son of Adam can obey it; for "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;" but "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Those then who are justified by faith, in the blood of the atonement, are delivered from the curse of the law. The dominion of sin, which was by the law, is broken, and they are under grace; but is the law, through faith, made void? is it abrogated? no, far from it: "Yea, (says Paul) we establish the law;" and our Lord says, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil." The law then is a rule of conversation to all believers, and still continues to curse all who reject the gospel. The heart of a sinner must be purified by faith, ere he can, in any respect, love God, and keep his commandments. Those to whom "the Lord has shewn what is good," for acceptance with him, are required "to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God." The life of a Christian is by faith, and his works are to be the fruits of the di-

vine righteousness, "the work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope," &c. He cares nothing for morality, generally so called; his principle is the holiness of the truth. That law which formerly cursed him, he now finds to be the royal law of liberty; for it is his choice. No doubt he still carries about with him a body of sin and death, the old man in his members, against whom he is called to a continual warfare; but his "delight is in the law of the Lord, after the inward man." Being called to love God who first loved the guilty, his conscience is brought into subjection to his authority alone. The grace of the gospel teaches him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world." While acting in character, he reverences, and labors to act according to these words, (Rom. 13) "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal, nor bear false witness," &c. and if there be any other thing, it is briefly comprehended in these words, namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; love worketh no ill," &c. But further, we consider that a Christian cannot consistently act a double character, *i. e.* be at one time a Christian, and at another a man of the world. He ought to be continually under law to Christ. As a subject he must pay tribute, and live peaceably with all men, rendering to all their dues. As a master, he must not be austere, but gentle, knowing that he has a master in heaven as a servant, not purloining, but shewing all fidelity. If a husband, to love his wife; and wives to reverence their husbands. If a father, to bring up his children in the fear of the Lord; and if children, to obey their parents in the Lord: "and all things whatsoever we would that men should do to us, to do so unto them," &c. Now if we would serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, all these things must be done as to the Lord, and not unto men, serving the Lord Christ. If we be bought with the precious price of divine blood, we are under the highest obligation, to serve God in our bodies, and in our spirits, which are his. I doubt not but these are your views, and the views of your friends. May I then dear Sir, subscribe myself

Yours in the common faith,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

James M'Gavin to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 9th December, 1813.

Dear Sir,

IT was on the 23d of October, that I wrote you a long letter, &c. There is only one circumstance that prevents me from suspecting that it might not have reached you, and that is, that you have not wrote to me to know the reason of our delay respecting the proposed union of churches. In my turn I am anxious to know the cause of being so long in hearing from you, as it was suspected that you might be ready to write about the same time that I wrote. I hope nothing has taken place to mar or retard so desirable an object. Our friends at Glasgow, &c. are often making inquiries, but I am unable to satisfy their anxiety.

Make my best respects to the friends in Kendal; and in expectation of seeing you next month, according to appointment,

I am with much esteem, dear Sir, yours truly,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

Joseph Churchill to James M'Gavin.

NOTTINGHAM, 8th December, 1813.

Dear Sir,

YOUR letter, with those of the other churches in Scotland, was read over to the church assembled here on Sunday afternoon last: but further discussion on the subject was postponed till our meeting this afternoon; at which with the most perfect unanimity it was agreed that an union should take place between the churches in Scotland, and the churches here in connexion with the churches in Yorkshire and Lancashire. We shall convey our sentiments to that purpose through the agency of our brother Pearson at Kendal; and will now address you, in order that we may transmit our sentiments upon the words *transient communion;* the relative meaning of which term we have not a definite idea of, but would speak more pointedly upon it, if we knew to what part of Christian practice it refers. We have supposed that it might relate to some practice made use of by some persons

who think, they might attend the ordinance at some times, and omit it at others, under some pretence of not being fitted, prepared, or qualified for it. On this head, we observe, that it is strictly the duty of the followers of Jesus, to attend constantly to the celebration of the Supper every Lord's day, in commemoration of what Jesus did, and suffered on the behalf of his people, and this in obedience to his command; thus shewing forth his death till he comes again. And they have the example of the first churches, who continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Again, it may allude to a brother or sister having received an offence, and in order to avoid that method, which the Scripture points out, of going to the person, giving offence, and communicating the nature of the offence so given, absent themselves from their own church, and go to another. This we hold to be essentially wrong. It is not conforming to the laws of Christ's house; and is taking judgment into our own hands, instead of conforming to those laws which are instituted by infinite wisdom; and therefore best calculated to heal the breach, to recover the brother, and to glorify the Saviour by attending to his voice. We also consider that any brother coming from a distance, and residing for a length of time, is to be considered in all points as a brother; whether it may require compassion, love, or kindness; or whether patience, forbearance, or separation. Only in cases where the last instance is resorted to, we should think it prudent to inform the church from whence he came of his conduct, and of our reasons for proceeding to such lengths, that they may be aware of the truth of the charge, and deal with him according to the Scriptures, in case he should return to them again.

We heartily assent to your remarks on the effects of the gospel in the minds of those that believe. "Every tree is known by its fruits:" this is the criterion whereby the truth of the profession each person makes is to be judged of by his brethren: but a distinguishing feature of it is love. "Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This love must be genuine in its principles. It regards all the followers of Christ as brethren; it comforts under tribulation; it sympathizes in affliction; it relieves when in distress; it diminishes

when in danger; and it reckons every thing as wrong, which tends to weaken, impair, or lessen this love from being shewn to the brethren. It is true, occurrences will break out; but then it hopes, it patiently waits, it endures all things, till the truth is made manifest, and then it burns and glows with continued ardor, in proportion as it is assimilated to the love of Jesus, agreeably to his command that "ye love one another as I have loved you."

If the idea you have of transient communion, is not included in what I have stated, if you will favour us with it, it shall meet our attention: for whilst you have so candidly and scripturally stated your sentiments upon one subject, we think it our duty to return the same to you, thus mutually striving to convey instruction and edification. We shall feel happy in hearing from you again, and wish for your sentiments. The Elders and the church desire their love to all the brethren, and believe me to be, dear Sir, affectionately yours in the gospel,

JOSEPH CHURCHILL.

James M'Gavin to Joseph Churchill.

PAISLEY, 21st December, 1813.

Dear Brother,

Your very esteemed favor came to hand on the 11th current, in which you shew a very laudable anxiety to satisfy us, as to the question of *transient communion*, or occasional fellowship. I find that these words are not explicit enough for general use. They are too well understood in this country, and are applied to the subject of occasionally admitting to church fellowship those of other denominations of professed Christians. For instance, Baptists with Independents or Pædobaptists, and *vice versa*. Yea, some Societies in this country have gone the length of admitting, transiently, people of almost all distinctions, providing such have been found to be what is called *orthodox* in doctrine, and *moral* in conversation; although next day they may return to their former connexion; or rather are esteemed as never having left it. We are happy to find that you are ignorant of this appli-

cation of the words—1st. because it shews you are unacquainted with the practice, and is thus a sufficient answer; and 2nd. because you have been led to give your views on some other points, in which we heartily concur, and are glad to hear expressed.

I yesterday received, through brother Pearson, the correspondence with your churches; and the union being now formed, I salute you all as brethren in the Lord, praying that the God of love and peace may be with you.

A visit by any of your Elders or brethren will afford us much satisfaction.

I am, dear Brother, yours for the truth's sake,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS

From the Churches commonly called INGHAMATES.

Henry Bannister to John Pearson.

WINE WALL, near COLNE, Dec. 8th, 1813.

Dear Brother,

The correspondence between you and Mr. M'Gavin, relative to an union with the churches in the late Mr. Dale's connexion, was duly received, and read to the church here. Our brethren rejoice to hear, that in these perilous times, when men are lovers of themselves, proud blasphemers, &c. when the true faith shall scarcely be found on the earth; times in which the falsely professing church of Christ and the world appear to be fitting themselves by their wickedness for their final destruction; that God had reserved to himself a people, who, influenced by his fear, refuse to bow to the great and fashionable idols of this generation—UNIVERSAL CHARITY and INFIDELITY; deities which no sacrifices can appease, but "the faith once delivered to the saints, and the ordinances as they were delivered to the churches." We all rejoice in the consideration that the doctrines and practices of these people correspond so well with the Scriptures, that we consider them walking in the truth, as they have received a commandment from the Father and cheerfully embrace this op-

portunity to express our readiness to unite with them. Why should the trivial distinctions of countries and denominations any longer separate those who are of one heart and one soul? We pray that the triune Jehovah, whose divine providence has brought us acquainted with each other, may watch over us, and crown this proceeding, which we trust has been undertaken and conducted with a view to promote his unrivalled honor and glory with his blessing. The church at Haslingden, Salterforth, and in Bowland, express the same sentiments as ourselves on this subject, and unite with us in wishing you, the church at Kendal, and the northern churches, grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord. It should have been observed, that our willingness to unite, is in confidence that the Scotch churches abstain from eating blood, and from frequenting and countenancing the vain and carnal amusements of plays, cards, horse-racing, &c.

John Green and Isaac Bayley to the Church at Wine Wall.

NOTTINGHAM, Oct. 9th, 1813.

Dear Brethren,

We received your printed letters, and were glad to hear that steps had been taken in order to form an union with the churches in the late Mr. Dale's connexion, which we have long considered as having the same faith, hope, and practice as ourselves. The letter from Mr. James M'Gavin confirmed that opinion. We approve the open frankness with which he writes. We think it not strictly in order to have the supper without Elders, or an Elder; for if all things can be practised without Elders the same as with them, their use will not appear of that importance which the New Testament represents. We understand from a letter Mr. Pearson has sent here, that the sentiment had never been acted upon in any of the churches, and in general is disapproved. The members of the church here have all had the printed letters to read, and have had a meeting to consider the subject of uniting. We have it in charge now to say that they will gladly form an union with these churches in Scotland, seeing no subject of difference exists, except the above, and

which may justly be considered a matter of forbearance. We view it a duty, as well as a privilege, to unite with those who have the same faith, hope, and practice with ourselves. It is like a three fold cord, not easily broken. We have no other motive but the glory of our common Lord, and the good of Zion.

Joseph Nicholson to the Wine Wall Church.

LEEDS.

As we perfectly agree with the northern churches, we thought it would be the least trouble to inform you, that no unnecessary time might be spent, but that an union be attained as soon as possible. Since we saw Mr. Peterkin's letter, the church are all perfectly satisfied; and we sincerely hope it will be for the mutual edification of them and us. May we all therefore manifest that we are of one mind, that the world may believe that Christ has a people in the world, serving and worshipping him according to the Scriptures of truth.

John Whitaker and John Winterbotham to John Pearson.

WHEATLEY, near COLNE.

According to your request we give you our thoughts on the faith and practice stated in the letter from the north, and also on the proposed union with those churches professing the same. On the first of these particulars we remark it gave great satisfaction, and produced an agreeable astonishment in the minds of the brethren. They without exception appeared to rejoice, from a consideration that the truth in its primitive simplicity, with the ordinances of the gospel, was professed and attended to by those churches in the north. We think it would be unnecessary to enlarge upon the different subjects contained in the letter. It shall suffice to say, that the minds of the brethren might be summed up in the words of the apostle Peter, "This is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."

It is not the opinion of any in our church that believers are warranted to attend to all the ordinances of Christ without an Elder or Elders: but they do not consider this difference of that

magnitude as to prevent an union, since it is but matter of opinion, and that with few. As no subject of importance appears, on which we differ with those churches, it becomes a matter of duty to unite in one; and may we through divine mercy not only be brought to agree in bearing the name of Christ here, but be preserved to meet in the realms of bliss, to part no more, but sing through endless years the worthiness of the Lamb who was slain.

John Briggs to Hartley Earnshaw.

HOWDEN, Sept. 28th, 1813.

Dear Brother,

We have received the printed letters, and they were read over before the church on the Lord's day. They gave us much satisfaction to hear of a people in the north, who appear to us to know the truth. We think that James M'Gavin's sentiment of disciples attending to the ordinance of the Lord's supper without an Elder, is not according to God's appointment. The rest of their sentiments expressed in the letter, we think, is agreeable to the Scriptures; praying that the Lord who walks in the midst of the churches, may be our guide; that whatsoever may be done by us may be for the good of his people, and his own glory.

Norman Foulds to the Church at Wine Wall.

TODMORDON, Sept. 27th, 1813.

Dear Brethren,

We received your kind letter; also the two circulars from Mr. James M'Gavin and John Pearson. I am authorized by the church to reply, and to express our joyful surprise to hear of such a number of churches, with which there is such a pleasing prospect of enjoying fellowship. We consider Mr. M'Gavin's statement of the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel, to be agreeable to the Scripture, and are unanimous in feeling no objections to unite, but rejoice in the prospect of it. We pray that the union may be a means of increasing the love and affections of both parties. I conclude with respects, &c.

Benjamin Wood to John Pearson.

TADCASTER.

Dear Brother,

With pleasure we acknowledge the receipt of copies of Mr. M'Gavin's letter, and brother Pearson's answer. Respecting the proposed union, I have to express, on the behalf of the church of this place, our hearty concurrence, so far as we are yet acquainted, and conceive it our duty to offer our unfeigned thanks to the Father of mercies for so unexpected a discovery of distant friends. We consider the faith and order contained in Mr. M'Gavin's letter, to be perhaps the most expressive and scriptural statement we have ever seen in so little a compass, save in one particular, which we consider as done away by the conversation you have had with friends at Glasgow, &c. The practice of receiving the supper without an Elder, which Mr. M'Gavin contends for, appears to us subversive of the order of a church; and God is not the author of confusion, but of order and peace, in his churches.

We would beg leave to state a few particulars, that we could wish to be informed of; but rather expect that you, brother Pearson, will be able to answer a part, if not the whole of them, without their going farther.—1st. Do the churches in the north allow of what some call innocent amusements, as plays, dancing, horse-racing, &c ?—2d. Do they consider second marriages to disqualify for office bearing ?—3d. Do they consider the Scripture to forbid our eating a common meal with an excommunicant ?—4th. Does the Scripture forbid our receiving any after second excommunication ?—5th. Do they consider it scriptural to speak of the divine Three as distinct persons ?—6th. Do they allow of blood-eating and things strangled ?

Praying that this correspondence may come to an agreeable issue, and that our souls may be refreshed and comforted by our mutual faith; that though absent in the body, we may be present in the spirit, joying and beholding the order and steadfastness of each other's faith in Christ. Waiting your further communications on this pleasing subject, the church at Tadcaster unite in love to the church at Kendal.

Robert Horrocks to the church at Wine Wall.

Bulwell, Oct. 12th, 1813.

Dear Brethren,

In answer to your request, I am authorized to say that we cordially approve of the proposed union, and rejoice to hear that God hath yet reserved to himself a people to shew forth his praise. The great Head of the church informs us, it was his will that his disciples should be one, even as he and the Father were one; which oneness, as it respects his people, may, I think, be comprehended in the unity of faith, hope, and practice. In this they have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ purges them from guilt. The harmony of sentiment professed and practised by believers, and the mutual interchange of those sentiments, whether by word or epistle (agreeable to that spirit into which they are all baptized) undoubtedly has a tendency to build up each other in the truth, as it is in Jesus; to strengthen their faith in the Lord, and in the comfort of love; to excite a sympathy amongst the members of the one body, however distant in space; to pray one for another, and provoke to love and good works.

The sentiments communicated in the letters of Messrs. M'Gavin and Pearson, on the part of their respective connexions, we perfectly approve, and leave no room for remark, except the kiss of charity (in place of which we use the customary form of salutation, by shaking of hands every first day) and the observing of all ordinances without the presence of an Elder. This subject has not occupied much of our attention, and was never practised by us; and as we understand it is but in opinion with them, we judge it no bar to the union, but a matter of forbearance. I also add, that the grace of God teaches us not only to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, but nonconformity to this world, whether in its doctrines or practices, its lusts or pleasures. The vain amusements of this life, such as plays, &c. have a tendency to intoxicate the mind, and draw the Christian off his guard, and are included in the apostle's description of the world (1 John ii. 16.) Such folly is also distinguished as one of those things that choke the word, and a feature that designates an enemy of the Gospel,

lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

I have been the more explicit upon this, because of some description of professors who indulge themselves in that respect. Not that we have the least ground to suppose that to be the case with the churches late in connexion with Mr. Dale (which we hope it is not) but merely to express our ideas upon that subject, on which if they agree with us, we see nothing to prevent the most fervent unity in the one mystical body of our living head, and wish that the blessing connected therewith may be useful, general, and lasting.

Praying that you and all that love the Lord Jesus Christ, may receive grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord, I subscribe myself on behalf of the Church, and in the communication of their love to you all, &c.

(End of the Extracts.)

John Pearson to James M'Gavin.

KENDAL, Dec. 17th, 1813.

Very Dear Brother,

I anticipated the anxiety our northern brethren have experienced from our cold taciturnity, which your last kind communication confirms. I delayed writing to you for the following reason:—A brother of the name of Lee, from the Wine Wall church, spent a sabbath with us five weeks ago, who informed us that we might expect the answers of the churches in a few days. We waited in anxious expectation until last Wednesday week, when a letter was sent to Colne to inquire the reason. On Saturday the parcel came to hand, which perhaps had been sent off before our letter reached them. No reason is given us for the delay; hence we cannot communicate any to you, which I hope you will excuse. Your last letter came to hand on Saturday night, and your former one in due course; for which accept our thanks. A copy of the first was immediately sent to Lancashire, and we are happy to hear was in every respect satisfactory to the churches.

Allow me now, dear brother, to intimate to you the inexpressible joy I feel, in being supported by all with whom I have been connected in a profession of the gospel; to conclude, I hope, this

correspondence by most willingly accepting your proposal; to unite, and give to you in return the right hand of fellowship, that henceforth we may be one, and love one another for the truth's sake

I have much to communicate, and as the post is just due, and you are looking for the extracts, I shall err if I cause a post's delay. In haste.

I am, dear brother, your unworthy but affect. brother,

JOHN PEARSON.

A LIST of the CHURCHES denominated INGHAMITES, situated as under.

Place.	*Shire.*	*Number of Members.*	*Elders' Names and Designations.*	
Kendal	Westmoreland.	——	27	John Huck, Farmer.
Nottingham	Nottingham	about	25	John Green, & Isaac Bayley, Fellmonger.
Bulwell	Do.	——	17	Robert Horrocks, Lace Pattern Drawer.
Tadcaster	Yorkshire	——	14	Benj. Wood, & George Hollings, Tailor.
Howden	Do.	——	11	John Briggs.
Leeds	Do.	——	9	Joseph Nicholson, Book-keeper.
Wibsey near Bradford	Do.	——	10	James Garrs, Weaver.
Todmorden	Do.	——	5	None.
Salterforth	Do.	——	21	Henry Holgate, Weaver.
Rothwell and Tosside	Do.	——	8	None.
Wine Wall near Colne	Lancashire	——	41	Henry Bannister, Weaver.
Wheatley	Do.	there are	56	John Whitaker, Farmer, and John Winter-
Hastingden	Do.	——	8	None. [botham, Weaver.

James M'Gavin to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 21st Dec. 1813.

Dear Brother,

I was wrong informed as to the numbers in some of our churches. By a letter received this month from Kirkcaldy, I find that Balchristy church consists only of twenty members, and Earlsferry of seventeen. Perhaps there may be a variation also in some of the others, as I got part of my information only from Glasgow. We have had three added since the enumeration. I have likewise learnt of a new church at Dumfermline, Fifeshire, of six members. They have chosen a brother of the name of Thomas Dick to be their Elder. There is also another small church at Strathaven, branched off from the one at Hamilton, consisting of about five members; but yet without office bearers. They have expressed their hearty concurrence with the union. The sermons you sent me have afforded much satisfaction; and I am sorry that I cannot return you the compliment in kind, as none of our Elders have been in the practice of printing any of their discourses. Believe me to be, dear brother,

Yours in the common salvation,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

James M'Gavin to Benjamin Wood, Tadcaster.

PAISLEY, 27th Dec. 1813.

Dear Brother,

An extract of your letter to Mr. Pearson, respecting the union now formed betwixt us, has been sent me, and in which you propose to us six questions. I trust I have hitherto carried on this business in candor and openness, indeed so much so as to have brought upon myself a pretty severe reprehension from you, unto which, so far, I bow, but not as being convinced of any error. It would have been agreeable, had you illustrated these queries yourself: but still I am ready to act in the same open manner, premising that I write to you only in the name of the church in this place, leaving it to the other churches in Scotland to answer

you in their own way, and at their own time, unto whom a copy of this letter may probably be sent, along with the substance of the whole correspondence.

1st. You inquire, "Do the churches in the north allow of what some call innocent amusements, as plays, dancing, horse-racing, &c.?" We do not advocate any of these things. As such practices are conducted and carried on, we view them as calculated to stir up and gratify the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life: but though a brother should happen to be a witness to a dance, or a horse-race, it would have to depend on the circumstance of the case, whether or not we should consider him a transgressor of the law of God.

2d. "Do they consider second marriages to disqualify from office bearing?" By no means. We consider the apostle's word (1 Tim. iii. 2) to refer to the well known practices of having more wives than one at the same time; if otherwise a man could not be an elder if unmarried, or after having become a widower; for in these cases he is not the husband of one wife. Moreover, when a wife dies the husband is free from the law of his wife, and he is at liberty to marry whom he will, only in the Lord.

3d. "Do they consider the Scripture to forbid our eating a common meal with an excommunicant?" This refers to 1 Cor. v. 11; "If any man that is called a brother be," &c. We can count no man a brother for a moment longer than he is proved, by the mouth of two witnesses, to be either a fornicator, an extortioner, or a drunkard, &c. The laws of Christ's kingdom do not destroy the ties of civil and social life: the case might be betwixt a husband and a wife, a parent and his offspring, masters and servants, partners in trade, inmates of the same house, &c. but we think that in most other cases no unnecessary companionship, or intercourse should take place, that such characters may be ashamed. Indeed we may differ a little amongst ourselves, as to the precise meaning of the apostle in the passage referred to, and would be glad to hear your opinion of it. At any rate we consider the restriction to respect those characters, who are said to be excluded the kingdom of heaven, and not those who wish to draw from us, or be separated merely on matters of conscience.

4th. "Do the Scriptures forbid our receiving any after second

excommunication?" As we consider ourselves wholly debtors to sovereign grace, reigning to the guilty in the forgiveness of their sins, through the blood of the atonement, far be it from us to set limits to pardoning mercy. When any one gives evidence that God has forgiven him, we are bound also to forgive, as in the presence of Christ, and to confirm our love to him, however notorious or repeated his transgressions may have been.

5th. "Do they consider it scriptural to speak of the divine Three as distinct persons? We do not quite understand whether you wish us to speak as to the word *distinct* or *person*, and shall therefore consider both separately.—This is a subject, above all others, purely of revelation, and not of reasoning. In Scripture it is plainly revealed, and expressly said, that "there are three who bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are One;" one self-existent and independent Jehovah. The Father, Son, and Spirit are so distinct, as to be described as the *sender* and *sent*, the *giver* and *gift*, 1 John iv. 14. "The Father *sent* the Son, the Saviour of the world," John viii. 42. "I proceeded forth, and came from God," John xvi. 28. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world, and go to the Father," John iii. 16. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," 2 Cor. ix. 15, "thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift." Again, the Holy Spirit is so distinguished, as to be the sent of the Father and the Son, (Luke xi. 13) "Your heavenly Father shall give the Holy Spirit to them who ask him;" and John xv. 26, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."—How or in what manner such distinction exists, we do not propose to understand. But we think we see such a revealed distinction in the Godhead in all his works: even in creation the Word commands, saying, "Let there be;" the Spirit moves on the face of the waters, and God beholds all things to be very good. What a grand figure of redemption. In it we behold the Word, who was God, who in the beginning was with God, and by whom the worlds were made; working salvation manifold, the Holy Spirit appears overshadowing the Virgin, descending on the holy child Jesus, at his bap-

tism, in a bodily manner; and he is representing as operating in the hearts and conscience of sinners to their conviction and conversion; not by private whispers, or secret illuminations, but by means of the truth of the gospel; for he glorifies Christ by taking of the things that are his, and shewing them unto us: and again, we have the Father testifying of Christ, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased;" and in his resurrection from the dead, most amply declaring, that all his work is *very good*. An attentive reader of the Old Testament will see in almost every part of it the saying of Jesus verified:—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." With respect to personality, we are not fond of using the word, as we know it has been often employed by schoolmen, as if they were speaking of three human beings. We are more ready to speak of the person of Christ, because, although he be truly God, yet he is also truly man, a partaker with those whom he condescends to call his brethren, in flesh and blood. Indeed the apostle uses the word *person* as applied to God the Father (Heb. i. 3) "The express image of his person;" but we understand those words to express no other idea than (Col. i. 15) "the image of the invisible God." We reject the common way of speaking of the Godhead by the ordinal numbers, first, second, and third, because it is not only unscriptural language, but must also imply inferiority, as a first is before a second, and a second before a third; and the Bible does not always keep the same order, in speaking of the divine three. We likewise reject, and that with abhorrence, the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God, as most gross and unscriptural, and tending, although unintentionally, to rob him of his dignity. The passages that speak of generation, and of being begotten, most plainly respects his incarnation, resurrection, and numerous seed.—I have been the more plain and explicit upon this head, as it comprehends the great and glorious mystery of godliness.

And 6th. You inquire, "Do they allow of blood eating and things strangled?" Certainly not. Surely no conscience under a sense of divine authority, can willingly break so plain a commandment; a prohibition first made when no shadow was intended, but on the grant of animal food, with that restriction, and so solemnly forbid by the Holy Ghost, through the apostles at

Jerusalem; and which decree is alluded to by the Spirit unto the churches in Pergamos and Thiatira.—We have long had to suffer reproach, on this account, by those who would have us to reason as the serpent did in beguiling Eve. Yea, hath God said, the same prohibition must be attended to, as to "things strangled," where the blood is not extracted. In opposition, dear brother, to those who would sit in the temple of God, and "think to change times and laws," let us be found stedfast in the testimony and commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Thus have I, according to ability, answered your queries. Be pleased to say, if to your satisfaction. It will divide the labor, if you will communicate those our sentiments to the churches at Wine Wall and Bulwell, who wishing to have our views on the subjects of blood-eating, plays, horse-racing, and they add card playing, of which we also disapprove.

The church at Paisley salutes the church at Tadcaster in love. A visit from you would be very acceptable.

I am, dear brother, yours in the love of the truth,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

Benjamin Wood to James M'Gavin.

TADCASTER, Jan. 19th. 1814.

Dear Brother,

We duly received your valuable communication of the 27th of December, and were higly gratified with the answers to our questions, which express our views with far greater clearness than we are able. Such a oneness of mind in sinful depraved creatures, who until now were unknown to each other, does appear not a little wonderful; yet we should remember the new covenant blessing—"They shall be all taught of God." The Scriptures of truth are a treasure to the believer, far above rubies or the finest gold, even the gold of Ophir; a treasure which nothing in the world can equal. They are a revelation from the God of heaven, displaying his gracious designs towards the sons of men; wherein his love, his superlative love, in the gift of his Son, is made known to the vilest of mankind. They are likewise the

grand directory or compass for pilgrims and strangers, to guide them in the way through this rough stormy wilderness, and at last to land them in the celestial city above, where all their troubles will be for ever ended. We rejoice, and desire to be thankful, that the wise disposer of all things hath opened to us an intercourse with his redeemed, and sought out people at so great a distance. Although we may not often see each other's face in the flesh, yet there is a throne of grace which is ever open of access; and what a gracious privilege that we can resort to here, to pray one for another, that our heavenly Father would bless us with all needful blessings, and preserve us unto his heavenly kingdom.

As many of *us* on this side the Tweed (and I may say in particular myself) are unlearned and ignorant men; yet if we know the truth as it is in Jesus, this will be enough. It is this that gives us a degree of boldness in thus addressing you; knowing that "every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him;" and "charity suffereth long, and is kind, beareth all things," and covers a multitude of faults.

When we wrote to brother Pearson, expressing our approbation of the union, which is now brought to so desirable (and we trust beneficial) an issue, we expected from his previous knowledge and personal interviews, that he would be able to answer a a part of the six queries, if not the whole of them, without their going any farther, but do not now regret the manner in which they reached you, for the reason expressed above. We are particularly pleased with your comprehensive answer of our fifth question, which, while it maintains so forcibly the necessary scriptural distinction in the godhead, at the same time guards against the opposite error sometimes understood by personality. We thank you for your ideas, though unsolicited, on the eternal generation of the Son of God, and believe our churches in England hold it in equal abhorrence with our brethren in the north.

You request our ideas on the third question. We conceive your answer to convey a very scriptural idea. Our reason for stating this question was—there are some professors who maintain it to be unlawful to eat a common meal with any one who is excluded their communion, even though it should happen between a man and his wife, but will give you our ideas of the passage referred

to (1 Cor. v. 11) in few words.—We consider the design of discipline to be two-fold, 1st. to preserve the purity of the church, as a little leaven leavens the whole lump; 2d. to bring the offender to repentance, as the apostle directs the church to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. We consider the prohibition mentioned by the apostle, "with such a one no not to eat," to reach no farther than the Lord's supper. This is drawn from the words "if any man that is called a brother," &c. and also from the last sentence in the chapter, "therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

I thank you for your kind invitation; but age and infirmities forbid me the pleasure. Our yearly conference is expected to be holden at Tadcaster, in June next. I shall be glad to see you and as many of our northern friends, as can make it convenient; but intend writing more particularly before the time.

The church in Tadcaster unites with me in love to the church at Paisley, praying all grace may abound and super-abound towards you all from God the Father, and Jesus Christ our common Lord.

I am, dear brother, in the behalf of the church,

Yours most affectionately,

BENJAMIN WOOD.

P. S. Copies were sent to Nottingham and Wheatley churches, and they were forwarded as requested.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Alexander Tilloch, London, to John M'Leod, Paisley.

London, 26th Dec. 1813.

Dear Brother,

Your letter of the 21st was received on Saturday, and was read with the printed correspondence to the church this day: it has caused great joy amongst us. I am desired by the church to write to you, for the information of the church of Christ in Paisley, and to be made known in what way your church may judge most expedient to the other churches in our connexion: that we

heartily approve of the proposed union with those churches at Kendal, Wine Wall near Colne, and elsewhere, who have been found submitting themselves to the same Lord, observing all things which he hath enjoined, as far as they have been enabled, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to discover the same from the Scriptures, the only rule of faith and practice, who are contending earnestly for the same faith with ourselves, the faith delivered to the saints by the apostles who received it from him, by whom the Father has spoken to us in these last days, even his Son who has purged our sins, and is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; and who have no other hope before God but what arises from a belief of his testimony, that the despised Jesus of Nazareth, who was put to death at Jerusalem, is indeed the Messiah of God, who was spoken of by the mouth of all the prophets since the world began, who hath magnified the holy law of God, made an end of all sin-offering by the one offering of himself; an offering in which the Father hath smelled a sweet savour of rest, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, a righteousness which is unto and upon all that believe. It is a matter of great joy and satisfaction to find others to whom we are unknown in the face, and who, deriving their faith and practice from the same divine source, have been brought to see with the same eyes. The reason is obvious. God himself is the teacher of his own children. No wonder then that they are brought to the same mind, to ascribe all the glory of man's salvation to the free sovereign grace of God, who has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and justifies them freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who died, the just for the unjust.

The church here request that you or Mr. M'Gavin will, as soon as convenience will allow, give us some information, farther than we have yet had, respecting these churches—how many there are, where situated, their numbers, and who are their Elders, the proper address of Mr. Pearson, &c. praying that the God of peace may fill you and every member of Christ's body with joy and peace, in believing the glad news proclaimed to the guilty and perishing.

I am, my dear brother, yours in the truth,

(*signed*) ALEXANDER TILLOCH.

Copy of a Circular Letter to the Churches in Scotland.

PAISLEY, 28th Dec. 1814.

Dear Brethren,

I have now the agreeable communication to make, viz. that my correspondence with Mr. Pearson is arrived at that stage which enables me to say that an union is formed betwixt those churches in his connexion and those in ours. The church here, last Lord's day, by prayer and supplication, commended them to the Lord, on whom they have believed.

I intend that the substance of the correspondence shall be printed for the satisfaction of the churches. Our friends in England wish very much for a visit from one of our Elders in the north. They propose to defray his expences if necessary. I salute you in love.

JAMES M'GAVIN.

John Pearson to James M'Gavin.

KENDAL, Feb. 20th, 1814.

Dear Brother,

In the letter received from the Scotch churches, expressive of their willingness to unite with the Inghamite connexion in England, I perceive from Alexander Coutt's communication and others, that it would have been satisfactory to them, had we expressed our opinion on the subject of transient or occasional communion, in the letter detailing our faith and practice. Now that the union is effected, there appears no good reason why we should withhold any information that may prove instrumental to the establishment of Christian confidence, and the increase of brotherly love. For the satisfaction of our dear brethren in the north, I can assure them that the churches in South Britain not only abstain from such anti-scriptural practices, but view with regret the existence of this false charity, in various bodies of professed Christians in this part of the island. It appears to us to be a feature of Christianity falsely so called, and a radical departure from the faith and order of the primitive churches. The first Christians

were of one heart and one soul, in the one truth concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus their Lord and Saviour, Acts iv. 32; 1 Peter iii. 8; and were forbid to hold fellowship with unbelievers, and the unfruitful works of darkness, 2 Cor. vi. 14; Eph. v. 11.

That charity, which the apostles so frequently approve, and so earnestly inculcate in their writings, was found in close connexion with, and glorying and rejoicing in the truth, 1 Cor. xiii. 6; 2 John iv. But when the gospel came to be corrupted by teachers of uncircumcised hearts, seeking after filthy lucre; preferring indolence to industry, and receiving to giving, contrary to the express injunction of the apostle to the Ephesian Elders, Acts xx. 34, 35. Then the gospel was laid aside as the bond of union, and a speaking of the world, that the world might hear them, occupied its place. We must greatly err in judgment, if we can look upon such as influenced by love to God, and the hope of glory in a future world; or that they are loving one another for the truth's sake. To draw together multitudes of people, and render the *seat rents* productive by any means, appears to be a greater object to this class of professors, than preaching Christ and him crucified; and looking for gain from any quarter, more than rendering thanks to God, on perceiving the genuine effects of the gospel, the work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us, dear brother, attend to him who is the Shepherd of the sheep, and who saith to his followers, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Christians must lay their account with suffering for righteousness sake, and with being hated of all men on this side the grave: but it is enough for the servant to be as his Lord, and ought to reconcile the human mind to Christian suffering. The little flock who are the pillar and stay of the truth here, are every where, and in all ages, spoken against: but it is the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom.

Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and from being lead astray by the error of the wicked; to him the King of kings and Lord of lords, the first and the last, that liveth and was dead; to him with the Father and the Holy Ghost, appearing in the Lamb that was slain; may we unite with the angels round

about the throne, and with the thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, in saying, To him belongs the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Amen.—In haste.

I am, very dear brother, yours in the hope of eternal life,

JOHN PEARSON.

James M'Gavin to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 3d Jan. 1814.

Very Dear Brother,

I am glad to find by yours that we are so much of one mind also on the subject of occasional communion, or catholic charity, as it is very often denominated. I shall now conclude this correspondence,* which has afforded me much satisfaction and ground of thanksgiving to the Father of mercies; inasmuch as it has terminated in our union, which I trust will be lasting, and tend to our mutual comfort, and to the glory of that rich grace wherein we as guilty can only find a standing before God, and be accepted in the beloved. Let it be the prayer of each of us, and one for another, "that our hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Let it be to us, as it was to the apostle Paul, when addressing one of the churches, though absent in the flesh, yet was he present in the spirit, joying in beholding one another's order, and the stedfastness of our faith in Christ, that we may be found followers of the churches which in Judea were in Christ Jesus, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

Let us increase and abound in love, one towards another, and towards all men; to the end that our hearts may be established unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints. Let our profession be

* At least so far as I know at present.

distinguished by our work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father, shewing what manner of entrance the apostles' doctrine has had amongst us, in turning us to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come; and let our whole lives shake with the fruits of righteousness, that we may manifest our gratitude to him who gave his life a ransom for many. To him be the glory, both now and for ever: Amen. And now we commend you, brother, and all the brethren, to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified. Believe me to be, very dear brother,

Yours in the hope of eternal life,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

James M'Gavin to John Pearson.

PAISLEY, 24th Jan. 1814,

Dear Brother,

When a few of us had the pleasure of seeing you here in August last, you communicated that the churches in England, are in the practice of having a yearly conference. I was so much satisfied by your representation of the matter, that it quite escaped me till lately—the propriety of having the same communicated to all our connexions in this country. In Scotland we have never had any thing like general conferences. Whatever has in any degree interested the whole, has been conducted by letters, or deputies from one church to another. Lest misrepresentations on the subject go abroad, such as meeting to give laws, to settle disputes, or determine cases of conscience, I have to request that you will write to me, detailing the business of these meetings, and the grounds upon which you act; doubting not but that your account will be as satisfactory to others as it was to myself.

I am, dear brother, yours affectionately,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

John Pearson to James M'Gavin.

KENDAL, Feb. 13th, 1814.

Dear Brother,

Your letter was duly received, in which I am requested to transmit you, for the satisfaction of our northern brethren, a short account of the nature and manner in which our annual meeting is conducted. In the first place it is not an assembly meeting together to legislate laws for binding the consciences of Christ's subjects in any sense, but for mutual instruction and edification.

Previous to the time of assembling, an invitation is sent from the church where the conference is held to all the churches in the connexion, requesting the attendance of as many of the brethren as can make it convenient. The place of meeting goes round the churches in rotation, and is held annually in the month of June, about the middle of the week; so that distant brethren may have an opportunity of returning to their respective places, by the next sabbath. On the Tuesday evening a sermon is preached by one of the Elders from a distant church, and on Wednesday and Thursday two or three sermons by different persons from sister churches, are preached each day; so that the brethren have an opportunity of ascertaining, in some degree, if they are of one mind and judgment on the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The intervals between the preachings on the two days are employed in the discussion of queries formed in general from obscure passages in the word of God. The least in the churches are not only permitted, but invited to express their opinion on the subjects introduced: hence Elders and brethren unite in free discussion. I have now only to add, that these meetings are begun and concluded with prayer and praise.

Brethren meeting together for the purpose of conversing with each other on the subjects of Revelation, will find to their experience the good effects of such communications; and that instruction and edification will reciprocally arise. Moreover this conduct appears to meet the divine approbation, as having a foundation in the word of God. When Israel had deeply revolted and apostatized, we read that "they who feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book

of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels," Mal. iii. 16.

The union and fellowship of God's children is formed in this life by the gospel, through the operation of the spirit of Christ. They are united to Jesus their head, and one to another as members of his body; nor shall life, or death, or devils be able to separate them. Loving as brethren, it is a pleasing thought that they have an eternity before them: for when the sun shall be extinguished in eternal darkness; when the heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll; when the earth with all its works shall be dissolved, their union shall survive the general wreck, and exult in the enjoyment of youth immortal. On this side the grave they experience many obstructions to an uninterrupted and personal fellowship with each other, which creates bitter sensation: but such is the nature of their union and inheritance, that their duration shall be coeval with his years, who sits upon the throne for ever, the Ancient of days, who is, and was, and is to come.

May the good Lord whom we profess to serve, teach us to love one another; for love is of God: and behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, in giving us his Son: and, beloved brother, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. May we be enabled to exhort and edify one another, building up one another in the most holy faith; for how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. All that are with me salute you. Grace be with you all. In haste.

I am, very dear brother, yours in the best of bonds,

JOHN PEARSON.



COLNE:

PRINTED BY H. EARNSHAW.

A

LETTER

FROM

MR. JAMES M^{c} GAVIN,

stating his ideas on the subject of

BREAKING BREAD WITHOUT ELDERS,*

Written to and at the request of H. Earnshaw.

My Dear Brother,

In your favor of the 7th current, you say, "I am in a great measure ignorant of the arguments used in favor of the ordinance of the Lord's supper being administered without an Elder, and I may also add, of those against it; and should esteem it a particular favor if you would give me your thoughts on the subject." From the way in which some of our brethren in the south have in the *correspondence* treated this subject, you must be aware of the delicate ground on which I stand in expressing my thoughts. I deprecate much the usual effects of controversy, altho' it is in this way that truth frequently is manifested; and why ought we not to discuss all questions that may come before us, in gentleness and love. However, from the agreeable temper of mind, that was shewn by our English brethren at Tadcaster,† I certainly do expect that none of them will be offended for stating what I consider to have learned from the word of God; whether they may see it in the same light or not; and the more especially as my sentiments are solicited. Indeed I am certainly bound in duty to answer your request; to refuse it would argue either shame or inability to expose my own views, or the "fear of man which bringeth a snare," and I am not conscious of any of these having any hold of me in the present instance; but rather a desire to render a reason to every man that asketh, in "meekness and fear." To proceed, I reckon it necessary to arrange my

* It is but proper to observe, that the writer of this letter has had recourse in some of his arguments to the assistance of a well wrote pamphlet, published a few years ago by Mr. T. W. of Paisley—unto whom he has made, personally, an apology.

† The Author attended at the social meeting held there in June last.

thoughts under the following heads: viz. First, what is a church in the scriptural sense? Second, is the Elder's office necessary in such churches? And third, is it lawful to observe the Lord's supper in churches, altho' they may not have Elders? The first two heads may soon be discussed, as I presume there is no difference of opinion amongst us on them.

First, what is a church, &c.? In the world called christian, there is a grand mistake about the meaning of the word *church;* it is understood to mean all the peoples, multitudes and nations that profess one creed: hence the church of Rome, church of England, &c. But, (not to notice the Old Testament church,) in the New Testament the term is applied to a company of Christ's disciples that usually met in one place to observe the institutions of their Lord and Master; as the church at Jerusalem, Corinth, &c. and not the church of Galatia, but the churches in Galatia, &c. In our translation of the bible, the translators have rendered the word *church* in Heb. ii. 12. which being a quotation from Ps. xxii. 22. 25. is rendered *congregation,* which is the same as *assembly* or *meeting.*

Second, is the Elder's office necessary in such churches? Here I must answer in the affirmative, and that for two obvious reasons: first, common experience teaches us that no society, of whatever description, can exist without a president; yea even in heaven, this order shall be preserved, for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne; the great Pastor and Leader of his people, "shall feed them, and shall lead them beside fountains of living waters." In churches which have no Elders, one must be appointed protempore to preside, or take the lead in all matters they as a body engage in; so, what are Elders but permanent presidents. And secondly, a reason for this, and which is above all others, that it is the will of the head of his body the church, who has both appointed the office, and by his apostles has described the characters who are to fill that office. See Matt. xxiv. 45. Mark, xiii. 34. 1 Tim. iii. 2 to 8,—and Titus, i. 5 to 10. That this office was to be permanent in the churches, is evident from Acts, xx. 30. where Paul says unto the Elders at Ephesus: "that of their ownselves," (and so in after-times out of this office) "would men arise speaking perverse things." We must not, (as some do,) conclude that office bearers are only a mere form in christian churches; for they are certainly much calculated for the well-being, order and happiness of such societies. To say otherwise, is to impeach the wisdom, love and care of Christ towards his people. Hence those who may neglect, when characters appear qualified, to have office bearers ordained amongst them, are guilty of despising an important ordinance of the Lord, and have no reason to expect his blessing; and on the other hand, to call men to bear office who have not the qualifications described, is also to despise divine authority, and to

bring disgrace on the Lord's appointment. But let it now be observed, that altho' Elders are necessary, yea essentially necessary, to the proper *order* and *well-being* of every church of Christ, yet they are not in any shape necessary to its *being*, or existence; according to the above view of churches, they do and must exist before they can have office bearers, for we know of no other mode to obtain these but by a church choosing them from amongst themselves, agreeably to the directions given to the church at Jerusalem respecting Deacons: and the Elder's characters are drawn and delivered to the churches for the like purpose. Moreover, in Acts, xiv. Paul and Barnabas, after they had, through the preaching of the gospel, planted churches in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch; returned again sometime afterwards and ordained them Elders in every *church*. So was Titus left in Crete, to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain Elders in every city where churches had previously been planted. Elders are only local officers, belonging to their respective churches, and not like apostles or evangelists, who were in office by the immediate call of heaven to go out and gather churches together. But in the nature of the thing, and nothing is more obvious from the New Testament, than that a few disciples statedly meeting together in one place, is a church before they have Elders, and so remain to be, tho' they should after having, be deprived of them; and that Elders or Bishops are not in existence till called forth by the voice of the congregation over which they are to rule or precide. *

I come now to the third head, and unto which the two former are only preliminary, which is—Is it lawful for churches to observe the Lord's supper, who may not have Elders; or when no Elders are present? I wish you had been able to state the reasons, if any exist, why not; for I really find it difficult to write or speak upon what is so exceedingly plain, as that they may and ought. I am placed somewhat in the predicament of a mathematician, being called upon to demonstrate a self evident proposition; or as if I were to set about to prove by reasoning, that the sun shines at noon-day. In going along, then I must suggest such arguments in opposition to my own views as I may suppose, or have heard stated, but in doing this, I may overlook the principal arguments that you might perhaps adduce.† Now before proceed-

* It is very common to hear people speaking of an *organized church*, by which is meant a society having Elders in distinction from those who have not; and so the organization of a church is made to depend on its having Elders. This truly is placing the office very high indeed; this may pass in Presbyterian churches where the Clergyman forms the summum bonum of their existence; but how will it do among churches who profess to have the one faith, hope and baptism which form the living principle, for that which gives life is the ground of all organization either in the human body or in the body of Christ. If a church have life in Christ, the living one, she is truly organized in the proper acceptation of the word, altho' she may not have Elders; but without these she is not in that order laid down by the apostles.

† The writer has undoubtedly heard many more arguments against breaking of bread without Elders than what he here notices; but he considers them so irrelevant as not to be worth stating in a letter of this nature

ing farther, one thing is necessary to be kept in view, viz, that *inference* justly drawn from scripture, is equal to express precept and example; upon this principle we often reason on the subject of Infant Baptism; and also respecting our authority to observe the Lord's supper *every* Lord's day in churches where Elders are, &c. &c. It has often been triumphantly asked, "shew us any example of churches observing the supper without Elders;" but here it is easy to return the question, and ask, shew us one example in all the New Testament of a church meeting together on the first day of the week and not to break bread? This is the natural and proper state of the question, as I hope, shall be by and by made to appear. The churches mentioned in Acts, xiv. 23. Titus, i. 5. must have met for worship; else how were they to judge who were the individuals marked out by Christ as qualified to fill the Elder's office, and what good reason can be assigned for making the Lord's supper an exception among the ordinances observed? There is surely nothing in the nature of it that can lead to a conclusion of this kind. Certainly we have exploded the clerical cant of ordinances more *ordinary* and more *solemn*. This we shew our abhorence of, when opposing the Presbyterian or Episcopalian half yearly or quarterly sacraments, as they chuse to call them. In this case we have to maintain, and *do* maintain, that there is no distinction in this respect amongst public ordinances; and why are we not consistent? Why are any of us found about divine things acting as the legs of the lame? But supposing that the supper is a more holy or solemn ordinance than any other; how comes it that an Elder is more qualified to preside at it? Is *he* more holy than his brethren? Has the Lord placed him in the same character as were Moses and Aaron, or as the priesthood under the law? I know you cannot say so, as you must know that this view would be to impose upon the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ of whom their office was typical. Where, let me ask, has our Lord placed an inseparable connexion betwixt Elders and his supper? No where, that I can find; and if so be the case that he has, is it not remarkable that we have neither express precept nor example for an Elder presiding at that ordinance at all? We are not able to prove that the church at Troas had Elders; and yet we can easily infer from what is said of them that they statedly met on the first day of the week to break bread, whether Paul was with them or not. We hear much said about *dispensing* the ordinance. I as an Elder, in this respect have nothing to *dispense*, I only propose that while this ordinance is attending to, to *preside*. We hear also of *official administrators*. But such terms smell rankly of the vocabulary of Babylon. We are blamed with invading the Elder's office, and assuming that presidency which belongs only to them. And no doubt so we would if any private member were to take the lead and an Elder present and able to act, which cannot be allowable conformably to that order

appointed by Christ. But notwithstanding, do not private brethren, (and properly too,) take the lead and preside in such societies as have not Elders, in every thing except the Lord's supper? And all this too without the least shadow of express example from the New Testament. If there be any thing more peculiarly attached to the Elder's office than another, it is *rule*. Now this peculiar, so to speak, and most difficult part of his work, is not scrupled at, in private members exercising in conducting discipline where there are no Elders. This is without example, but the propriety of it is easily inferred so as to be equal to express example or precept. But to come more closely to the point, where are we to learn what ordinances were observed by the primitive churches? Most undoubtedly from their example, and the various precepts delivered by Christ and his apostles, and left on record. One clear specimen shall suffice at present. Acts, ii. 42. "And they," viz. the church in Jerusalem, "continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Here I apprehend, is a plain and simple view of the ordinances observed by the first churches, (for in other places they became followers of this church,) whether with or without Elders, as shall now be shewn. As churches will in every age, be found in the situation of the churches in Acts, xiv. 23. for a time wanting Elders; unless these have a pattern or example left them for their public worship, they cannot meet at all. But as we have but *one pattern* for public worship left on record, it must follow that this *one pattern*, of which the Lord's supper forms a part, is intended as a rule to all the churches of Christ, whether with or without Pastors. If we do not admit this, it is incumbent next that we shew the pattern or example for the worship of societies without Elders, including the number and nature of the ordinances fit for them to observe. That the *one pattern* exhibited in the church at Jerusalem, and copied in the other churches, as to the number and nature of public ordinances, is intended for all the congregations of Christ's people, will appear further evident from what Paul says, 1 Cor. iv. 17. "For this cause have I sent Timotheus,—who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church." Paul's *ways in Christ*, undoubtedly mean the doctrines he taught concerning Christ, in order to be believed, and the ordinances he delivered them to observe, even as he received them from his Lord. These he taught not only to churches with Elders, but also to churches without Elders, or "*every where*, in every church." We often argue with others, that the church in Jerusalem continued as steadfastly in the breaking of bread as in the fellowship, &c. And are we not, in making the observation of the supper, to depend upon the presidency of an Elder, putting asunder what God hath joined together, and the more especially, when we consider that a church cannot with propriety be keeping the first day of the week sacred to the

memory of Christ's death and resurrection, unless they be found in all situations, where they have liberty to meet together, commemorating his dying love in his own appointed way. I shall now consider farther—the Lord Jesus says: "wherever two or three are gathered together in my name;" or according to the Old Testament way of expressing the same thing, "wherever my name is recorded there will I be to bless them and to do them good." Surely this blessing must be looked for in doing his will and not in neglecting to do it. Well, the blessing is promised to a company of his disciples without limitation as to having Elders, if they cannot obtain them. Now to the very same class of disciples he says, at the institution of his supper: "Do this in remembrance of me," without any limitation whatever. And who taught us to limit or divide, respecting what may be done with Elders and what not? Surely none of us have learned it of Christ; how then can a church living in the neglect of so important a duty, expect the divine blessing? As Elders do not constitute the *being* of a church, and as it is by public ordinances that churches are exhibited; so the non-existence of Elders in a church, can not do away the observation of any ordinances, (for if one why not all) otherwise that church ceases publicly to exist. This reasoning must be so conclusive, and the inference so just, that I might safely leave it to the judgment of every one of my brethren if they would but lay aside their prejudices, which on this subject are too near akin to those who support clerical dignity. But why need I reason more upon the subject; are not all our churches in the practice of, at times, observing the Lord's supper without Elders? Nay brother, do not stare, I have heard that you called Inghamites sometimes do this, and I verily believe it. For instance, does not a church without Elders attend to this duty when a stranger, the Elder of another church, visits them? But he is an Elder! Yes, but where? not in that church; there he is no more than a private brother; altho' deference to the character he elsewhere sustains, ought certainly to procure him the preference beyond any other. An Elder is a Bishop—he is an Overseer—a Shepherd or Pastor. If then a Bishop, where is his bishopric? If an Overseer, Shepherd or Pastor, where is his charge that he is called to oversee; or the flock he is to rule among and feed? Surely those, and those only, over which the Holy Ghost has placed him. How strange would you look if I were to write you that I am an Elder to or in the church at Winewall, near Colne; that you are part of my bishopric and of my flock; this would be to revive the doctrine of *universal* bishopric with a witness! Alas, my brother, how strangely do we allow our minds, to be clouded with the mist of ignorance, and have amongst our hands the means of expelling it. Before having done I have one thing more to state, and it is necessary to be said lest I be misunderstood, which is, I look upon the Lord's supper, not only as a

social ordinance; but also as a church ordinance *only*, and not to be observed in detached or broken parties, nor in a family capacity, unless that family be a church or public body, statedly observing all things whatsoever Christ has commanded; and my reasons are, first because the supper represents the one redeemed body, of which every distinct church is a figure, living upon the one bread, even Christ Jesus whose flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed. See 1 Cor, x. 16. 17. And secondly, we see from the xi. chapter, that when they were to attend to the breaking of bread, they were to come together into *one place* and to *tarry* one for another. I hope now that if my brethren in England were to read what I have thus written, they would hesitate in alledging that my views on this subject are subversive of every degree of order. I am an advocate for the most strict and rigid order; but it is such order as Christ has appointed in his word, and which is consistent with that liberty wherewith Christ has made his disciples free. I do apprehend it to be rank disorder to separate the social ordinances of Christ's house, and to set one above another; and calculated to keep us in subjection to the traditions of men. As my conscience would bind me, if placed in such a situation as to be the member of a church having no Elders, to observe the Lord's supper every first day of the week, (I would certainly if in my power, not only have an Elder, but a plurality of them.) So I hope that none of my brethren would think me disorderly, because we could not see it our duty to appoint men to that office who might not bear the scriptural qualifications. You will observe that I all along put the question of breaking bread without Elders on the footing of having no alternative.

I may also state, that as a plurality of Elders is necessary to complete the order of a church, and if the want of complete order be a reason for not observing the Lord's supper, then why observe it, as it is often done amongst us, where there is but one Elder? Indeed we shall search long if we think to find good reasons for inconsistences, and in deviating from the plain path of simple truth. Truly, congregational, as well as national churches, still need to be told of the necessity of ceasing from the opinions of men, and to search the scriptures with their own eyes, and with as few preconceived notions as if they had never before looked upon them; having dependence on nothing for illumination but the teaching of the spirit of all truth. That prejudice guides us in many things is evident, for we would have the same objections to private members baptizing, and yet I presume you may easily find express example for this. Finally, have we, like the Clergy, made these two ordinances *sacraments*, that is, covenants or oaths; and are Elders to be viewed in the same situation or light, as civil Magistrates or Justices of the peace; viz. that none but they have authority to take an oath?

I have thus endeavoured, according to ability, to answer your request. I might have said much more on some points; but if you have any objections to make that are not here noticed, I shall be glad that you state them. If I can, they shall be answered, and if I can not, I hope I shall have the honesty as to acknowledge it. If I should have said any thing that may be thought too keen, I hope it will not be attributed to any disrespect to my brethren that are otherwise minded; but wholly to the importance in which I view the subject.

I remain,

Very dear brother,

Yours in the gospel of Christ,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

Paisley, 17th October, 1814.

FINIS.

H. EARNSHAW, PRINTER, COLNE, LANCASHIRE.

A LETTER

TO THE

Editors of the Christian Herald,

IN ANSWER TO THEIR REVIEW

OF THE HISTORICAL SKETCHES

OF THE

Scots Old Independent and Inghamite Churches,

AND THE CORRESPONDENCE

WHICH LED TO THEIR UNION.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWIXT THE AUTHOR AND THE EDITORS.

PAISLEY:
Printed by J. Neilson.
SOLD BY G. CUTHBERTSON, PAISLEY: M. OGLE, GLASGOW;
OLIPHANT, WAUGH, AND INNES, EDINBURGH;
E. LESSLIE, DUNDEE; D. PEAT, PERTH;
AND H. EARNSHAW, COLNE.

1816.

THE publisher of the following pages has most unwillingly been brought before the public at present, and much more so in this shape; but, seeing the Editors of the Christian Herald have refused him access to their pages, except upon unreasonable terms, he has no alternative betwixt submission to an unprovoked, and, in many instances, an unjust attack, and publishing his defence in this form. He has got too good a specimen of their manner of making quotations, to allow them the liberty of extracting such parts as they might see proper from his reply; nor does he exactly know what parts would be deemed suitable for insertion. It seems there must be no reply to points of opinion, but only of facts, and consequently he must state no opinion, but be restrained merely to facts. To say the least, this would be to submit to a very arbitrary mandate; for he knows not what law has constituted them in a right to say what they please, without those attacked having an equal right to reply, seeing no doctrine is attempted to be impugned. He is certain it is in direct opposition to those principles of liberality they talk so much about, and a violation of the golden rule.

After perusing his correspondence with the Editors—the publisher makes his APPEAL to the mind of every candid reader, whether they have acted *honourably* and *honestly* towards him and his denomination in shifting themselves free, and declining to grant any information respecting the charge of immoral practices, especially considering their professions of *Christian regard*: also, whether the spirit shewn in their note of the 8th Nov. does not prove how justly he may attribute many of the assertions and inferences in the Review to PREJUDICE, as if lying in wait for an opportunity to find vent, which it got immediately on the appearance of the pamphlet professed to be Reviewed.

He finds, from the Editors' letter of the 6th current, that his answer to the Review will be esteemed a direct attack upon their denomination; but in what respect he does not comprehend. The attack was made by *them*, and certainly *he* has a right to self-defence.—He has not needed to travel much out of the record, and if he has done so in any instance, it is merely to wrest the weapons of offence out of the hands of his opponents,—and, after all, he has allowed them to retain more than probably some may think correct. He has also passed over much that could easily have been made the subject of severe animadversion.

The publisher can assure the Editors, that in whatever light they may view his reply, he does not bear, either to them, or to any of their denomination, the least degree of animosity in consequence of what has taken place. He would wish to cultivate another spirit. And if his language is sometimes sharp, it is on account of the impracticability of having it otherwise, in consequence of the nature and temper of the paper that has given rise to it; but he hopes it will be found respectful, for such has been his aim.

Any additional matter to what was transmitted to the Editors is enclosed within Brackets.

29th December 1815.

The Reader will please correct the following with a pen:—

Page 5, line 26. for *over-straining*, read *neglecting*.
18, 27. for *many*, read *some*.

To the Editors of the Christian Herald.

GENTLEMEN,

THERE are only two bodies of professed Christians in Scotland, known by the name INDEPENDENTS, not but there are others also, who, in point of church order, are Independent; but these are distinguished by the name of Glasites or Sandemanians, and Baptists of various designations, &c. Of those two bodies you seem to identify yourselves with the younger, or what we understand, in this part of the country, by *Tabernacle People*. From this body we would have expected rather more civility than appears in your Review of the correspondence of our Churches with the Inghamites, and which appears in your Number for October. It proposes to be a *Review*, but in truth it is, except in a few cases, an attack upon the Scots Old Independents, and that of a most violent and declamatory nature, exactly corresponding to what a good part of the paper is taken up in condemning. Were it necessary or proper, it would be no difficult matter to turn the chase. Your short, but eventful history, and present circumstances, would furnish abundant materials: but what would be gained by it—both of us would become the laughing-stock of the world, and a reproach to our profession: And, allowing I were to go to the extreme, and to consider the writer in a much worse light than I do, I would be far from condemning your connexions or teachers, as a body. For among you there are not a few who are most respectable characters, both as men and as christians, and with whom, I doubt not, the most of our connexions would wish to cultivate christian friendship, although you do not in all things follow with us, nor we with you *.

* When the Tabernacle system took its rise, the leaders or preachers in it were much caressed in various places by the old independents, and much better esteemed by them than any other class. Even many of their young men (if I am not misinformed) were much indebted to some of our Brethren; and had these societies shewn more attachment to the institutions of Christ's Kingdom, and less respect for men, it is probable that ere now both would have been united.

Whatever may have been your motives in writing the Review, (for so I shall call it) it is of no matter of importance to us—in so far as truth is stated, it is seasonable and necessary. But the fact is, (if you knew how to say it) we are much worse than you have said—our want of zeal—our lukewarmness—our carnality of mind—our conformity to the world—our being settled, as it were, upon our lees, are all things we ought to see and acknowledge: and certainly, to be told our faults by others, should turn out to our good; but the question is, are we to take with charges that we can prove to be untrue? And though they were true, are we to submit to be corrected by means we consider unlawful? Surely not. However, it is true, that in many cases, we have cooped ourselves up in obscurity, and have not shown that zeal which we ought, in studying to promote more just views of the gospel than those abroad in the world. If you have taken up the ground on which we should long ago have trod, and if you are engaged in winning souls to Christ, we ought not to grudge, or be displeased; we would rather seriously wish you Godspeed. There can be no cause for envy or ill-will in this matter. But hearken to some of the reasons that we would adduce for our seclusion, and want of exertion in preaching the gospel to others—I believe the reason for the first, is principally, if not wholly, owing to the poverty of those who are so obscure as alledged, and consequently their inability to furuish themselves with more public accommodation *. And as to the second—this

* In London the church meets in a private house; but for many years they met in a large place, in a very open situation, and equally few attended as at present. But it is erroneous to say the meetings of the church there, or the abilities of its chief speaker, are unknown. The place of meeting is in the most populous neighbourhood in London, *viz.* Spittal-fields, and well known to vast numbers of people, in early times worthy of notice, *viz.* the poor, and our friends there are on the most friendly footing with various churches of Baptists, &c. so as to have drawn much of their curiosity to hear him whom the Reviewer calls, and whom we believe is, "one of the ablest men in the kingdom." But the truth is, in London a greater shew, gesture, noise, and declamation are needed to get a crowd, than our friends reckon to be scriptural. And being on the subject of large houses for accommodation, I shall put one question to the Reviewer, whether is it better to be somewhat secluded, or get large houses in such a way as may afterwards beget bitter animosities and fruitless controversy. Some such things we have witnessed! Another thing strikes me here—some of our friends, I understand, have been pretty liberal to all applications made by the Tabernacle connexion for contributions to build them houses, (a matter by the bye that I do not think we ever solicited of them or any others) and seeing our own friends in Edinburgh, are so hid as not to be known by so many as 105 or 110 persons there, i. e. "not one in a thousand." I hope we shall take the

may be divided into two, (but which I grant are not good) 1st, There has long been a notion amongst us, that we are not called to preach unto the world, as every one in this country has a Bible in his hand—he has Moses and the Prophets—Christ and his Apostles, let them hear them: this I hope is rather wearing off. And, 2d, We have a great lack of people amongst us, that shew any aptness to preach or to teach, even so as to be useful in the churches alone. Here our want of zeal is more conspicuous than perhaps in any thing else. We do not approve of your system of training up men for the ministry, and being paid as for a secular employment, *viz.* By fixed income or salary; and the reason is, because we consider it unscriptural. I consider the churches as the only school for training up men either for preachers or exercising the elder's office, and that their support should entirely depend upon their need, and the church's ability, even to the taking of their lot, in deep poverty, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, if it cannot be otherwise. We have hitherto considered, and acted upon it, that an elder's support is a debt justly due by the church, and while they consider the injunction to Timothy, 1 epistle, v. 17.; he again, on his part, and according to circumstances, is bound to attend to Paul's charge to the elders, at Ephesus, Acts xx. 35. If in any degree the diffidence of our elders has led us to overlook the former, has not your system the appearance of over-straining the latter? The Lord Jesus has ascended, having received gifts for men—he bestows of these according to his sovereign goodness, saying, "Occupy till I come." Where this injunction is not zealously attended to, "there may we look for decline as a natural consequence, as well as a just retribution." And I am sorry to say, there has been too much want of energy amongst us *. But this does not establish an infallible rule to judge of the cause of churches declining or prospering, nor yet of them being removed. We may have all gifts—all knowledge and utterance, and yet be destitute of what constitutes the essence of being Churches of Christ, *viz.* Charity. Our churches may be large and numerous, and yet the candlesticks may be all removed.

hint, and for the future remember that charity begins at home. Some may consider you have acted ungratefully, but I reckon you have tendered a very just rebuke.

* [See a note at the end of this letter.]

Witness the Church in Rome, to which Paul wrote an epistle; what is it now? Nor is the circumstance of churches dwindling down to few in numbers, or becoming extinct, an evidence of their constitution being bad.

One would be apt to conclude, from what you have said, that all the primitive churches were badly constituted, because they have all become extinct, and even multitudes of your own churches are as rapidly declining as they were formed; and were I to take your rule of judgement, I would draw strange conclusions respecting the Tabernacle connexion. They are indeed pretty much like Jonah's gourd, for even, in comparison with the Old Independents, they may be said to be rising in a night, and falling in a night. There must be something wrong in this. It is not my business, but yours to account for it: although it might be very easy. "Let those who *think* they stand, take heed lest they fall," and "let not him who putteth on his armour boast as he who putteth it off." Things are sometimes best known by comparison or contrast. The Old Independents have now stood nigh 50 years—the Junior Independents about 15. Let the public judge which of the two appear to be in the most rapid state of consumption. I could enlarge here to great length, and enumerate, even from personal knowledge, the rapid rise and extinction, or at least declension of many of your churches, nothwithstanding of the contrivances that *your own* wisdom has suggested for raising up men for the ministry, and all that zeal you *have* shown in itinerating; but it might be considered invidious and retaliatory. The matter speaks for itself. I therefore forbear. It must astonish every impartial reader, that you, by any, should have touched upon this subject. But it is not true, in your own sense of the word to *flourish*, "that our cause is a sickly, or a dying one;" for though some of our churches have decayed, I am bold to aver, that at no former period of our history, have we numbered so many members as at the time of the union; and since have, both in England and Scotland, been greatly on the increase. And what is most unfortunate for your argument, those churches, whose teachers are *most busily* engaged as *Traders*, *Manufacturers*, *Farmers*, and *Merchants*, are the most flourishing! I say *flourishing*, for with *you* it seems this consists in numbers, a circumstance which we hardly so much as dreamt of till now; for if we had, pride itself would have prevented us

from publishing to the world an account of our numbers *.

I do not propose to boast in our late increase—it may be owing to our greater conformity to this world; nor do I find any pleasure in your retrograde state: but being compelled, I mention these things to shew how easily the tables might be turned. And I may add the old Proverb—I do it not in jest, but in soberness—*Physician, heal thyself.* Have we not something like a boast in these words, Page 393, "Within these last 15 years, these sources," *viz.* (of the increase of the Old Independent Body) "have been cut off by the intervention of a New Body of Independents, into which, from its greater publicity, enquirers naturally fall: so that, if they do not use some other means to preserve their existence, than they have hitherto employed, the extinction of most of them can be at no great distance." If the New Independents have found a better way, why, by all means, let the old ones fall: I have no objections—*we* feel no *personal* interest in numbers—truth is what we should desire to see prevail. But how do facts tally with the above prophecy? Why, just like a great many other prophecies of the present day. And what is passing-strange, these young *Brethren* have hitherto been good nurses to the old ones; and yet the old are so perverse as not to shew their gratitude, by returning the compliment in kind! Indeed, it may turn out that a few years may dissolve us altogether—I have learned enough, to know the instability of all churches formed upon the scriptural plan †.

If you want large *flourishing* churches, get them well endowed with large incomes—keep in them very popular preachers, and let them have an Act of Parliament to hold all together:—but for my own part, I would rather spend my days in a society of poor simple christians, who are influenced by nothing but the faith and hope of the gospel. It is very delightsome indeed, to see numbers collecting together in the profession of the apostolic faith; but I know

* I could easily suggest a reason why large bodies are considered *flourishing* churches, by some teachers in the Christian profession; but as it might be branded with the name of *Sandemanianism*—(a dreadful name in the ears of such), I decline. We have been in the habit of considering flourishing churches to be such (however small) who, like the Thessalonians, abound in the work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. No doubt, from such also the word of God should sound out, and they ought to be as cities set upon hill tops, giving a fair exhibition in doctrine and practice of the glorious gospel,

† Not that any fault lies in the word of God; but in human nature.

that spiritual comfort and conformity to the image of Jesus Christ are not the natural consequences. I consider a company of disciples, large or small, "continuing stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and in prayers," with one heart and with one mind cleaving to the Lord, as tending more to the glory of God, than if the one-half of them were continually running to and fro to promote the increase of their numbers, and, without the "Machinery of Ordinances," the former could not take place. Mind, I do not intend by this to excuse our negligence in being so unconcerned as we are, in taking every opportunity to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the lost. You say, "we do not go to the quarry." There is something so ludicrous in this comparison—something so like establishing a Christian Manufactory, that, were it not a serious subject, I would be tempted to try a little ridicule. I have not the pleasure of personal acquaintance with the Reviewer, but I would understand from his mode of writing—that he is a gentleman of vast importance, and undoubtedly of extraordinary abilities! But pray, are not your societies more beholden for numbers to the Establishment and Presbyterian Dissenters, than to any other quarter? And if it respects sending the Scriptures among the nations, I presume that few Societies in Scotland have shewn a greater zeal and readiness to contribute, than the Old Independents, according to numbers and ability. In this we claim no merit: It is our duty, and it is here stated as by compulsion.

In page 394 you say, "We think we discover in some parts of this pamphlet a decision of language about some things of less importance, and an indecision as to some of the most important points closely connected with the practical influence of the gospel." When I view the connexion of these words, and the subject taken up, we think we can discover and make good this charge against yourselves. What do you mean by the practical influence of the Gospel? Is it not obeying all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded?—Is the command of his Spirit against blood-eating of less importance than any other part of his will? Is it of less importance in a personal or an individual point of view, than the other things prohibited in the same decree? I hope you do not mean to inculcate, that pollution of idols and fornication, are of little importance, or less than any other part of the practical influence of the gospel. This

would tempt one to suspect that blood-eating is not looked upon in some quarters as a very heinous crime. I know not what constitutes any one thing to be sin more than another, if throw aside divine authority. If indeed reject this, Eve committed a very venial crime, to say the worst of it, in eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. True, sin is more or less heinous, according to circumstances and degrees of aggravation, but these cannot be pled in the present case. You may perhaps now discover a reason why I was so "sufficiently decided on *such* a subject," and possibly some clue to find out a cause for your own severity. But to come to "the following equivocal answer." The churches in England enquire, "Do the churches in the North allow of what some call innocent amusements, as plays, dancing, horse-racing," &c. I answer, "we do not *advocate* any of these things," &c. &c. In what follows I cannot yet find that I could return a better answer than the one given. If it appears to you as *equivocal*, it was perfectly plain to Mr. Wood, and the Churches in England: but perhaps they were too dull or unsuspicious. Let me try then if I can do away the charge of equivocation. In the first place, that letter, or all of them, were not written for the public eye—and I had not, without great trouble, the opportunity of correcting any thing in them, supposing I had been so inclined, before publication; and indeed many things would have undergone alteration, had I been near the press. But waving this:—A person, residing in P**** †, might easily have understood what I meant, especially after reading Mr. Wood's queries. They evidently respect a denomination who hold a number of things in common with us, and who, at one period, if not still—(I cannot say) did *advocate* and attend plays, dancing, &c. that they might be distinguished from demure pharisaical professors, as they were called. The Churches in England having had knowledge of these, (see Mr. Horrock's letter, page 33, Correspondence) wished to know if we were like-minded or not. But I have another reason for writing as I did, and on which I am bold to take my stand, if there is in the world such things as *innocent* amusements. You say, "for those who eat blood, no apology, it seems, can be made; but towards the frequenter of the vain and sinful amusements of this world, much com-

† [Mr. Orme, Pastor of the Tabernacle Church in Perth, is universally understood to be the author of the Review.]

passion may be shewn." Your conclusion is erroneous. I would not incline either to countenance or commend dancing or horse-racing, I mean just as I formerly said, *in the way they are conducted and carried on;* but, (passing over the jeers you have been pleased to emit) I can easily conceive cases in which dancing and horse-racing are as innocent amusements, as taking a walk in a good summer evening*. I cannot conceive any of them to be sinful in themselves—this entirely depends on the *circumstances of the case.* But I *do* consider public balls, routs, and assemblies, &c.—as "conformity to the world, prostitution of time and money, dissipation of mind, and incitements to fleshly lusts, and serious evils." And if any of our people were engaging in the practice of horse-racing, and the evils attending them, I could not say this was a case to think lightly of: Do not suppose that I am endeavouring to get off by a little sophistry, for such are some of the identical ideas that passed in my mind, when writing the letter in answer to Mr. Wood's queries.

And if you ask my opinion of the theatre, I shall freely give it, and at some length. I can also conceive cases, wherein young people especially, may very innocently repeat, or act select dialogues, or plays; but I cannot conceive it to be a Christian's duty, but a sin, to attend the theatre. I speak from my own knowledge, and youthful experience, when I say that it is truly calculated for the dissipation of the mind. To encourage such a profession is perhaps not the worst of its evils—the lascivious ideas, and blasphemous language—the cursings and imprecations—the prayers to, and invocations of the divine name, &c.—and the mimicry and imitation of the most awful and solemn things, such as death, are truly shocking; and I cannot conceive how any disciple of Jesus Christ, can, for a moment, find pleasure in witnessing and countenancing such things, without compunction and great defilement of conscience, to say nothing of the company they mix with in such places. Can we think of it yielding us any consolation at the hour of death? Is it connected with watching and being sober, hoping to the end? For if we have pleasure in it, it is such as intoxicates

* If we condemn all amusements in the lump, and without discrimination, we set ourselves up as lawgivers in the Kingdom of Christ, by putting restrictions where he has not. I cannot find in all the word of God a time given to sin; but I find a time to laugh, and a time to *dance*, as well as a time to weep and a time to mourn.

the mind. Would we wish to meet our Lord to judgement, while sitting in a play-house? And we know not in what night our souls shall be required of us. Is it having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but rather reproving them? Is it walking circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time? Or, is it not rather chambering and wantonness, and making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lust thereof? Sure I am, it is not connected with putting on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not the production of that grace which bringeth salvation, and teacheth to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, looking for the blessed hope. For Christians to think they can innocently attend such places of amusement, they surely know not the plague of their own hearts. What kind of conscience could one possess, who is engaged in daily praying, *Lord, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, and yet go to places which are only calculated to debauch the mind, and banish every serious reflection. It betrays such levity as cannot be seen in the spirit and temper of Jesus; and where this takes place, there can be but little relish for heavenly and spiritual things. The theatre is one of the grand engines of Satan, to uphold in the world its three grand lusts. The common plea of a well-regulated theatre being calculated to instil principles of morality, is only an excuse for present gratification—(I well remember of using this argument myself,) for even, according to the wish of those who urge it, it can never take place. Doctor Witherspoon justly observes, that such a regulation would be its own destruction, while the world continues to be what it is. And why should Christians talk about a well-regulated theatre, as being calculated to teach principles of morality? Have they not the most pure and perfect morality taught in the word of God? It reminds me of the story of a clergyman of Edinburgh, in a sermon, affirming, that if virtue were to appear in human form, she would be so beautiful and enticing as that all mankind would admire and follow her. Some of your readers may remember the reply made by his colleague *. It is not enough to say that play-acting, &c. are not by name condemned in the word of God—the nature of the things testify what they are. If we are possessed of that sobriety of mind—of that wisdom which cometh down from

* [*Virtue did appear in the world, but was despised and rejected of men, and put to death.*]

above, we shall be able to make such application of scripture doctrine as to shew we are not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is, so as at least to abstain from all *appearance* of evil, and the more especially, as none are wholly alive to the deceitfulness of sin. Every Christian may be certain that whatever the world, lying in the wicked one, are so fond of, must tend to evil, or at least be dangerous in tending to the hurt of their own souls; and, in point of example, hurtful to the last extreme. If such things are not conformity to the world in its sinful customs—it must be hard to say what is; at any rate, it is not, in the least possible degree, being transformed in the renewing of the mind. Mr. Horrocks, in his letter, pages 32 and 33 of the Correspondence, sums up the evil of these amusements in a very few words, to which I refer your readers. If the Reviewer had pleased to have read to the end of my letter of 27th December 1813, page 39, he would have found these words: *Communicate these our sentiments to the churches at Winewall and Bulwell, who wish to have our views on the subjects of blood-eating, plays, horse-racing: and they add, card-playing, of which we also disapprove*—ALSO DISAPPROVE. I do not propose to be an adept in language, but I presume no *impartial* reader would be at a loss to understand these words, without discovering any thing like equivocation.

I proceed now to a very personal charge. You say in page 394, nigh the foot of second column, "Indeed we are afraid Mr. M'Gavin, who conducts this correspondence," (only in part) "could not return a more decided answer;" (to the English queries) "for if such practices are not advocated, he may know, that they are neither condemned nor abstained from, by the body with which he is connected." Had the Reviewer acted in a fair and open manner, he would have given your readers to know what stands at the beginning of my letter to Mr. Wood. I shall supply this deficiency. In page 35 of the correspondence, at the foot, it is written—*I write to you only in the name of the church in this place, leaving it to the other churches in Scotland to answer you in their own way, and at their own time, unto whom a copy of this letter may probably be sent, along with the substance of this correspondence.* Does he mean to say that the church in Paisley neither condemns nor abstains from the things libelled? for I spoke only of them, and none else. If he does, he knows better what takes place here than I do! Against this I shall relate a circumstance. Some years ago

one of our members had one night attended the theatre—he was brought before the church—had to confess his sin; professing deep sorrow for his conduct, and a dependence on the atonement for pardon: without this he would have been excluded—and being restored, he walked for a short time longer in the fellowship of the gospel with us; but as it often happens with those who once give themselves up to indulge only a little in sinful pleasures, he was cut off for irregular practices. If the Reviewer does not mean the church here in particular, then he must intend the *whole body* of Old Scots Independents; but now his assertion is at least in part disproved. If he intends the charge to be levelled at some other of the churches, then why did he not speak with limitation? and if so, how can he affirm that I *may know* of what takes place in other churches?—for I can assure him, we have no system of espionage established; nor is the communication amongst us very close or frequent. And as it respects *my knowledge*, I am clear to affirm, that at the time of corresponding with the English churches, I knew of nothing to have prevented me from being equally decided in regard to the others, as I am now with respect to ourselves here; nor do I yet know—neither can I believe, the charge as it is made, *viz.* against the body in general, or against any particular church as such: It indeed, came to my ears, a few weeks before your Review appeared, that an individual in one of the churches had attended such places of amusement—and since, I have made more particular enquiry, and have found that the matter had been greatly exaggerated in representing, besides being unknown to the church—and as you have declined, in your private communication, to give me names and cases, I cannot guess at what you say is consistent with your *personal knowledge*. It is neither secrecy nor extenuation I am after—it is truth, light where it will. But you cannot suppose that, on your bare assertion, (the unsupported testimony of witnesses not free from prejudice) I will, in the name of our body, acknowledge transgressions I am utterly ignorant of, though your private card appears almost to claim it. Yet, (to give even those some security, who are so hard to be persuaded of our inclination to profit by rebuke) you may rest assured, I shall use every prudent mean to discover if the evil exists, and to what extent; though I hope, that when discovered, it will turn out like many things told by prejudiced minds, of a much less heinous nature than so broad a charge has a tendency to convey.

And I hope also, that when the parties are discovered, they will be more easily convinced of sin than you imagine; as no doubt, seeing you considered them as brethren, you would have attempted personally to reclaim them, having had such abundant opportunity!

During the writing of this letter two or three persons have voluntarily informed me that they had (since being members with some of the churches in our connexion, engrossing a period of from 10 to 24 years) *once* gone to a play-house, principally to have some knowledge of what it is, but came out entirely disgusted, and fully satisfied that it is not a place for Christians, in any point of view, to countenance. Although I do not approve of seeking knowledge in this way—yet will it in any shape be construed as "*frequenting* the vain and sinful amusements of this world?" Surely more than this must be intended in your charge, otherwise I may perhaps be able to retort, and apply the case of the woman taken in adultery.

I have passed over many things which are not considered as entitled to notice, and am now arrived within view of what you call the "bitter waters of Glas and Sandeman." These were men, not indeed infallible; far from it, for both of them, especially Mr. Glas, have written many things of which we cannot approve; but they in their time wrought a vast of good—and, to speak seriously, both you and we ought to respect their memory.—In entering into other men's labours, we are apt to forget our own mercies. Your words now quoted, appear to be part of a rebuke to some expressions in the correspondence which I shall immediately take notice of*. While I must claim a right to condemn error wherever it appears, yet I allow it is wrong to charge individuals or societies with motives which they themselves will not admit.—This is not to do as we would wish to be done to. Perhaps we all may be guilty of this; but what I am ready to acknowledge is, that congregational societies, in this country, have been too ready, in consequence of the opposition they have met with, to write and speak in an acrimonious manner, and in this I hope I stand corrected, and

* [We stand in a strange predicament,—I saw lately a M.S. of an English Sandemanian in answer to our pamphlet—He supposes there may be some Christians amongst us; but passes a general sentence of condemnation against our Teachers, and so far as I could judge, the principle reason is, because we speak so lightly of Mr. Glas—and are altogether highly reprobated for not following him and Mr. Sandeman.]

am disposed to kiss the rod. I shall now proceed to notice some of the expressions that you consider so *bitter*, and shall endeavour, if possible, to sweeten them. In page 44 of the correspondence,—Mr. Pearson, after speaking of occasional communion, says, we are forbidden to have *fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.* But as he does not absolutely apply the character to any professing body in particular, and may be supposed, from what follows, to have some very profligate or erroneous party in view, there was no necessity for the Reviewer taking it to himself. The next paragraph, which is particularly objected to as implying that he considers all Christian Teachers, except our own, as "*of uncircumcised hearts,*" by no means warrants this conclusion.—It only states, that when the gospel was corrupted by such Teachers, &c. it was laid aside as a bond of union. Church history affords us enough of this. Is it then, in this view, too much to say of such leaders, in such antichristian connexions, that to render the church seats productive is more an object than preaching Christ and him crucified? By no means.—It is a necessary consequence of such principles. Surely you are not ignorant of these things. For instance, would you yourselves not acknowledge it as a truth, that the priests in Spain, who call themselves Christian teachers, are more intent upon worldly power and emolument than preaching Christ? I trow you would.—Well then, is it not notorious "as the sun at noon day," that many of the English Clergy, not to exclude even some of the Scottish, are entirely on the same tack? What would you think or say, were you residing in a neighbourhood where the practice is to build chapels to let out to the highest bidder? Yea, perhaps a clergyman is the proprietor or tacksman, and who, to bring a larger income, will appoint an underling, according to circumstances; thus acting wholly as a man of business in any secular calling. Say, is any language too severe? is not this setting up the gospel (if it may be so called) to merchandise? Who does not reflect on the views of Simon the Sorcerer, and of the Apostle's reply to his request *.

* [Now, after these considerations, I leave it to the conscience of the Reviewer how he can so boldly, and in viewing what he is condemning, with so much effrontry—say, "another evidence of what we alledge will be found in the fearless manner in which they censure and judge the motives of others. Thus speaking of the whole body of Christian ministers who are not of their number, they represent them as teachers of uncircumcised hearts, seeking after filthy lucre," &c. and again, "it is maliciously asserted," &c. page 395. So far from such charges being true, I do not find that Mr. Pearson has said a word

The Reviewer has a particular bias to disjoint and misplace whatever words he takes in hand to expose. Does he do so in commenting on the word of God? I never heard him, but I hope he has, in this "learned a more excellent way." I do not mean any comparison, but he will surely allow that to take half sentences, and disregard all connexion, even with the scriptures, would be, most frequently, to turn them into nonsense and ridicule. It is a gross imposition on your readers to give them such partial quotations of the letters as he has in many instances done—Witness my letter to Mr. Wood, and Mr. Pearson's letter above referred unto, &c.—You must well know, that many, and especially of your own friends, may read the Review, who will never see the pamphlet—and if public report speaks truth, there is a design in all this. The charge of accounting ourselves the only true worshippers of God in this country, appears in part to be drawn from some expressions in a letter in page 27 of the correspondence—Mr. Bannister says—*our Brethern rejoice to hear—that God has reserved to himself a people* (alluding to the Scots churches) *who, influenced by his fear, refuse to bow to the great and fashionable idols of this generation*—UNIVERSAL CHARITY *and* INFIDELITY, *deities which no sacrifices can appease, but "the faith once delivered to the saints, and the ordinances as they were delivered to the churches."*

In the first place, are you yet to be informed that in the last days "perilous times would come," &c.—Are they come? They undoubtedly are. And are we to shut our eyes? Certainly then we would be in a most perilous state. Is Antichrist not to be found in Britain? Yes, truly—yea, the man of sin and many Antichrists. Is not *Universal charity*, (something so called, that does not rejoice in the truth) a very fashionable and prevailing thing amongst professors of the present time? and does not *Infidelity* also stalk abroad as in open day? I cannot think so much evil of

against one *Christian* minister, and much less against the *whole body* of them. It also appears the Reviewer knew by what spirit Mr. P. was influenced while writing—*viz.* a spirit of *malice*. Granting this to be true, do not the assertions of the Reviewer bear the same image in a tenfold degree? Ought he not then to have remembered Rom. ii. 1, to 4, and 21, to 24. But as I do not profess to know his motives, nor do I believe he could know that Mr. P. wrote in malice—so I must say, Judge not lest ye also be judged. And I would beg leave to let him see how his own words look after these remarks. In conclusion to the above quotations, he says, "We suppress what we intended to say, &c.—praying that our God may not mete out to them the measure which they have meted out to others."]

you as to suppose you will put the negative upon these questions. Well then, is not the scheme of catholic charity carried out so far in some instances, as to take the place in men's minds of the word of God in things belonging to Christ's kingdom? For instance, when a number of men, unknown to each other meet, say in London—they mutually consider missions to the heathen a good and scriptural work; they are joined on this head, and because they are so, they must sit down at what they call the Lord's Table. But as the supper is generally allowed amongst Christians to be an ordinance only observable in the churches of Christ, and not to be used as a *test*, or even a *badge* of union, and as these professors can by no means count themselves as a congregation or church of Christ, (for they often hold very different views of what constitutes a church) is it too strong to call this *bowing to the great and fashionable idols of this generation?* If this is to be vile in your eyes—LET US BE MORE VILE STILL. We shall no doubt be counted illiberal; but if we have no greater cause of being charged with self-conceit, we shall joyfully take with it. Also in page 32, correspondence, Mr. Horrocks rejoices that *God has reserved to himself a people to shew forth his praise.* This being a scriptural phrase, it is hard to take up a prejudice against it, and which in the strongest view only implies that the writer is unacquainted with any churches on the New Testament plan, except those he is united with: he cannot, from his situation, know much of Scotland, so he can throw no reflections upon any professors in it; and perhaps if the Reviewer were only conversant with some that our friends allude to, he might find a little difficulty to extend his charity so far as to call them followers of Jesus. In a word, it is uncandid—extremely uncandid, to catch at transient expressions used under the strength of local impressions, the nature of which we are ignorant of. This rash judging, however, the Reviewer abounds in, although he much condemns it in others. I shall just take notice of another expression in the correspondence, and which is in page 9. Mr. Peterkin says, *It gave great joy to the Brethren to learn that so many were reserved in England, by the power of God, to himself, from bowing in their worship to the idols of the day.* This subject having already been partly considered, I shall only observe, as many Antichristian doctrines and practices are allowed, we suppose, by the Reviewer to exist, both in England and Scotland, I am wa-

ranted to say, if he had not been very desirous to find fault with the Scots Old Independents and Inghamites, he would hardly have transformed such general expressions into a declaration that the writer was calling his party "the only true worshippers of God in this country;" only the strongest prepossession of mind could blind any person to draw such conclusions. I dare say, if he knew the writer personally, he would think otherwise of his views. The truth is, we profess to hold no such ideas; but we hold this, that we believe ourselves as the nearest to the truth of any we know, and who does not do the same? A conscientious regard to truth requires it.

If I do not mistake the Reviewer, I think I can discover, in his language, some things very indecisive indeed on the "practical influences of the gospel." I can discern something like putting the ordinances into the *shade* for the sake of preaching the gospel, which when believed will teach men to observe *all things* whatsoever Christ has commanded, without lightly esteeming any of his laws, and wherein they may not yet have attained in knowledge, they will labour to press forward in faith and order. I can also observe a lightness of expression regarding the *distinguishing* law of Christ's House, *viz.* the law of *brotherly love*, without which all our professions "are no better than sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." And indeed, so far as I have been able to learn, this law does not hold a very prominent part among many of your connexions, either in doctrine or practice. These observations do not flow from any desire to retaliate, but wholly from viewing the spirit and tendency of your production.

Were I at all times to judge men's minds by their words, I could point out sundry expressions in the Review, that would justify me, in saying that the writer of it has spoken words in hypocrisy; for instance, his professions of brotherly regard for our connexions, &c. But I rather incline to think he has written under the influence of prejudice, through which he has manifested much ignorance of our state in many respects, and which has led him into such palpable inconsistences, as professing brotherhood, and desiring an end to our existence. But I am wearied in exposing the failings of a fellow-sinner.

To conclude: it is very true, more so than we are aware of, that we may have "the language of the Publican and the spirit of the Pharisee." God forbid that I should endea-

your to deny the probability of this. And it is also true, that these words, "*My Kingdom is not of this world*, may be used as the watch-word of a party, while its meaning is not understood, and its spirit completely violated." I sincerely wish it were less true both amongst us and others.

Be pleased to accept of thanks for your exhortations "not to be high-minded," &c. &c. You might expect that I would return the compliment. It could be easily done. It is much easier to give in this respect, than to receive and practise. All that I shall propose is, that the writer of the Review would lay aside his asperity, and, with the temper of a little child, again sit down to his Bible and seek to learn what is the nature or constitution of a New Testament church, with its order and officers. More I shall not press.

Notwithstanding of your despondency respecting our amendment, I hope that your strictures will do us much good. It sometimes happens that the wounds of an enemy are better than the kisses of a friend; and rather than say I would wish for your extinction, I would rather fondly anticipate a period when we would more approximate, and be found all as one in the faith and obedience of the gospel, that we may mutually rejoice in the common salvation.

A word more and I have done. My various avocations do not admit of a protracted controversy, nor have I any desire to continue it farther: nothing but an imperious sense of duty to our friends in Lancashire, Yorkshire, &c. has impelled me to lift the pen, to do away the charge of dishonesty towards them, which you have so broadly laid down. And having once taken this resolution, it occurred to me as necessary to enter more at large upon the Review, lest it might have been considered that in every other charge judgement was allowed to go against us by default.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Yours respectfully,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

Paisley, 27th Nov. 1815.

P. S. I am rather disappointed that your number for this month has not brought the promised correction of the Historical Sketches. I anxiously wish for a more full and correct account. That the one we have published may, in many respects, be erroneous is extremely probable. I do not yet know of so much as a single error; but it was collected (i. e. the Scots one) in a very great hurry, and almost without possessing any other documents than what could

be gathered from the memory of some old members, together with the recollections of the compiler as to more recent circumstances. What you have expressed your surprise at regarding the usage of Mr. Dale and his friends, was taken from a written record, and vouched as truth. I have recently been informed that a very able and respectable Gentleman in Edinburgh, in conjunction with one in York, are engaged compiling a History of the Inghamites and Scots Old Independents. I should be happy of giving them every assistance in my power, and am very sorry that they were not known of as possessing documents for that purpose before the Sketches were printed. We can have no interest in any thing aside from attested facts.

J. M.

Note referred to at the foot of page 5th.

[We frankly admit that a church, even on the most scriptural plan, may, through want of zeal in its members, and deficiency in the important duty of searching the scriptures, and meditating on them, fail in raising up able and diligent Teachers, fit either to edify the church, or speak of the truth to the world—yet we reckon it quite compatible with diligence in business, to possess fervency of spirit sufficient to lead Christians to devote that time and attention to the study of the word of God, which is absolutely necessary in those who would even aim at teaching in the churches, or would profitably exercise the Elder's office, and what, may we ask the Reviewer, is there to hinder such men from growing in knowledge and utterance, so as to attain a small share of that eloquence and might in the scriptures, which rendered Apollos so useful to those who through faith believed, and which may be instrumental in making the gospel sound out unto the world? It will hardly be said, that, in the present state of society, any insurmountable barrier is laid in the education and habits of men engaged in the various occupations of life, to all this, or even the attaining a moderate degree of accuracy in public speaking.

We think it better to acknowledge our deficiency in *duty*, and stir up one another to diligence in the way the Spirit has pointed out, than to attribute our lameness to a wrong cause, and consequently to fall upon schemes to raise up men for the ministry, not provided for in the scriptures,—neither in name nor thing. The Elder's or Bishop's character and qualifications are to be found in 1. Tim. iii. chap. *He must be blameless*, or free from reproach—he must be *the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker; not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient; not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house*, &c.—*not a novice*, or young professor, *and must have a good report* in the world. Now, I apprehend, every part of this character is equally essential—not one part can be dispensed with. Such characters then can only be found in the body, or in the individual church in which they are called to exercise. None else can judge. Not even a sister church can supply or appoint for another, as it is only by long experience of one another's gifts, by which there can flow mutual comfort and edification. Now, does not your system go rather in opposition to this scriptural rule, and to such self-evident considerations? Did you never hear, or even witness, divisions and misunderstandings in your own churches, so as to scatter, and almost extinguish them, arising wholly from a deficiency of qualifications in your Elders, though thorough-bred speakers? who notwithstanding might perhaps not have another necessary gift—young inexperienced men—novices, too apt to be self-willed, especially when lifted up out of their

natural sphere in society—quite unable to rule, if even from no other cause than, that they may be unacquainted with the habits and tempers of their flock. Even the very education given them, tends to lead them to expect an unscriptural deference—a deference for the men's opinions, beyond the respect due to their office, and the evidence they bring from the divine oracles. In a word, as Paul has laid down no such qualifications as you, *practically*, seem to think necessary, we wish minutely to attend to the rule, and nothing but the rule, in our choice of Pastors. Any thing beside this, is either or both to add to and take from the word of God, and would argue in our people itching ears. That spirit which leads the multitude to desire classical Teachers for their Pastors, is very opposite to what Paul possessed, when, to the Corinthians, he says, *I came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God: my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God:* and lest he should make the cross of Christ of none effect. Besides all, your system creates almost an impossibility of following the apostolic rule of a plurality of Elders in churches, which must be absolutely necessary to the perfecting of the saints, else the Apostles would not have so appointed. There must therefore be a radical error in any plan that would in the least degree be a bar in the way of such order.

Attending to the scriptural rule in all things, is certainly the only way in which we can expect our Lord and Master's countenance, and be blessed with all necessary gifts. So, from his word we learn, (as already hinted) that Christian Teachers must be found in societies of Christians only, and that office-bearers must be judged of by their brethren to be possessed of all the scriptural qualifications, amongst which teaching is included, before they turn their eyes towards any one so as to elect him for presiding in their meetings as their Pastor. Now, if this be so, pray at what period does the scriptures make it necessary for any class of the members to be taught the sciences, &c. *in order* that, in after life, as need occurs, they may be the fitter to bear office? or are those who, after being approved of in all respects, including teaching, to leave the church, their families, and every duty incumbent on them as members of society, and go to school, in order to acquire or improve their gift for teaching? The issue of such a thing is not always very satisfactory. Men will almost uniformly, by such training, leave that simplicity which formerly recommended them to their brethren. Not that we by any means intend by all this to cry down learning: far otherwise; but we would leave every one to judge for himself, what he finds necessary or useful, according to his situation and circumstances. You reflect upon us "that the work of Christ is in the hands of traders and manufacturers, whose time is *wholly engaged in the pursuits of this world.*" Why, if this is true of any member of a church, he is not a Christian. Here lies what I consider your mistake; you cannot see how a Christian can be engaged in the lawful pursuits of life, and not be absorbed in mercenary cares. We profess and strive to practise other things. And we are not quite sure if it would tend to good, to change the Teacher's habits so far as to insist on his devoting all his time to reading and study, however profitable a certain proportion may be; for you are to keep in view, that Teachers, bred in the churches, have habits of application to business along with which study and meditation are found rather to be a relaxation and delight, and if left to follow their usual and natural way, these will become, by use, increasingly easy; but if throw them into another sphere, might turn a burden and task. We by no means say it is so to your friends, but we find it so congenial to our habits, and so useful in practice, to follow our own way, and that seeing no scriptural warrant for, nor even any tempting fitness in your plan, you must excuse us in not adopting it. You yourselves declare, in your address to your societies, in March 1811, that "we are far from limiting the hope of a supply of preachers and pastors to any institution conducted by men—we shall rejoice to see many brought forward to

labour successfully in the gospel, by other means than those we think it our duty to recommend." Now, after this, why find fault with a way which you in this address acknowledge (at least by inference) as sanctioned by the Holy Ghost, and in which you hope good to arise? And, moreover, we really apprehend that our mode has the most beneficial effects on the minds of men, and tends to draw their attention to these things, when they see plain tradesmen, and men of business, zealously devoting themselves, in the spirit of love, to the interest of the souls of men, and with reverence and modesty endeavouring to edify one another. This has a tendency to do away that mysticism that hangs over public teaching by professional characters, and does away also the idea of a separate order of men, altogether unknown in the primitive churches. Although we find ourselves on high ground, and secure in scriptural authority, as to our mode, we by no means boast of our acquirements. Far from it. For perhaps never any, with our privileges, fell so far short. We may also, in defence of our plan, be allowed to say, that even the most unconcerned cannot set our affectionate, though homely addresses, to their consciences aside, by saying we are paid for it, it is our trade, the craft we live by, as is often said of the ministerial labours of many zealous Teachers. We wish, in thus practising to follow the Apostle's mode of not being burdensome to any, rather working with our own hands—so making the office without charge—and our Elders wish, by honest labour, if they can attain it, to have to give to them who need, counting it *more blessed to give than to receive*; wishing not to avail themselves even of their just claim in order that it may be devoted to the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; and who should be so unkind as not to forgive them this wrong? It does not appear that Paul was afraid of "languor and decay" taking place in the church at Ephesus from this cause, when he so earnestly pressed his own example upon their Elders, (see Acts xx.) But indeed history shews sufficiently that languor and decay took place in consequence of the opposite extreme. We have seen amongst our Elders, that a conscientious fulfilment of the office in *every respect*, did not make it a duty to receive support, as, for instance, in the case of Mr. Dale, as also many others: And I hope you have found none in the office, otherwise in circumstances, having much reason to complain of injustice. You say our "system makes no provision for preaching of the gospel to the world." I really do not well understand what this means. If you intend to say we make no provision for sending the apostles among those who have not the means of hearing them—we deny the charge. If you mean that we do not study to revive the office of Evangelists, you are right. We know of no offices continuing in the churches except those of Elders and Deacons: no *office* of Preachers distinct from that of Pastors—whose duty, as such, belongs only to the church, or amongst their brethren, where they may take every opportunity to exhort and convince gainsayers as they appear. They, or every male member, as private Christians, may (and certainly it is their duty, according to circumstances,) go abroad and publicly or privately preach, without any further warrant than as Christ has given to them the gift. Those scattered on the persecution of Stephen, &c. *Went abroad, every where preaching the word*: and it requires only zeal and study to lead many to this exercise, who will never otherwise be found in the practice of it.

But although we do not see a distinct class of men, called Evangelists—Itinerants, or Missionaries, to use a more modern phrase, which was to continue as an office—of course, we cannot provide for such; yet, as we all profess to be influenced by love to Christ, and his cause among men, I do not think that any necessary countenance or even support will be denied to any of our members, either in or out of office, who are found forwarding this grand cause, to the injury of their business or families, either in travelling among the heathen, or translating the scriptures for them or those deprived of them: But a formal agreement for any such we cannot see—It must, in its nature, depend on the impression made on the brethren of their fitness, usefulness, and need, as well

as on the duty of such to apply for assistance, only when the circumstances of themselves and their families demand it.

And so far from us being displeased with brethren itinerating, we rejoice to find that it is much the practice of our new friends in England. They seem to possess more gifts, calculated for this exercise, than we do in Scotland—and some of them, even when travelling *on business*, take every opportunity, whether in a barn or a chapel, to preach the gospel, and this I would consider to be my own duty also in like circumstances, and I feel grieved at the idea of preachers laying themselves up as it were in idleness, when occurrences in Providence give them an opportunity to speak in the most public manner to their fellow-sinners of the glad tidings of salvation. Surely all who know these—who have received the truth in the love of it, and have the ability, will gladly embrace every call to this exercise. How can a believer have the joy and hope of the gospel dwelling in him, and not be concerned that others should share of the same? Paul was so much in earnest (and who, although an apostle, may in this respect be viewed as exemplary to all preachers in zeal) that he says, *I count not my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* That our appearance in this, as in many other respects, has not tended so much to the glory of God as it ought, is already admitted; but as we are agreed on this head in principle, there need be no strife betwixt us—You say "we are brethren," well then, with the additional information now given you, I hope the next time you tender us reproof, you will keep in mind to do it so as to merit the character, and have the effect expressed by the Psalmist. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head.*]

To the Editors of the Christian Herald.

GENTLEMEN,

In your last number you have a paper professing to review the correspondence, &c. betwixt the Scots Old Independent and the Inghamite churches. It falls upon me of course to say something upon the subject. This I hope to be able to do in due time—First, in acknowledging wherein we ought to stand reproved and corrected, and next in pointing out some false and erroneous conclusions, as well as ignorant assertions. But what is principally in view at present is, that you make good the charge you have made, *viz.* That attending plays, dancing, &c. or *the sinful amusements of this world*, "are neither condemned nor abstained from by the body with which he (Mr. M'Gavin) is connected." What I wish for, are not general and untangible assertions—give me names and cases, and if you do so, I shall consider myself, and the whole body, as bound to give you thanks. Altho' it be true, as you say, that we are your brethren, you

have forgot the rule, Matt. xviii. 15. * yet, notwithstanding, I shall consider that you have rendered us essential service, whether we profit by it or not. I call for an immediate reply to this part of my letter in such manner as you see best, and as will establish the facts libelled Until this matter be fully enquired into and searched out, I have not sufficient materials for an answer to your Reviewer. I hope you will insert this letter in your next number, and

I am respectfully, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
JAMES M'GAVIN.

Paisley, 28th Oct. 1815.

Mr. James M'Gavin, Pastor of the Old Independent Church, Paisley.

The Reviewers of the C. H. beg leave to inform Mr. M'Gavin, in reply to his letter, that they are under no obligation to involve themselves in a private quarrel between him and his friends, by giving him names and cases as he requests. They have taken the liberty to hint that *he may know* that attending public amusements is not discountenanced by the body with which he is connected. If he does not know it—they are sorry for his ignorance, and assure him that a little trouble and enquiry will put him in possession of sufficient information on this subject. It would be exceedingly foolish in the Reviewers to become private informers against individuals whose conduct is known to the public; and while they can assure Mr. M'Gavin that it consists with their *personal knowledge* that such conduct *is known and winked at by the Pastors* of the Churches with which the persons referred to are connected. If Mr. M'Gavin and his friends shall publicly deny this, he may rest assured that he will only expose the O. S. Independents to the double charge of countenancing iniquity and dishonestly denying it. They must be excused publishing his letter—because they can admit no answer to Reviews unless it is shewn that they have misrepresented the author, or mis-stated facts. As Mr. M'Gavin's letter contains *no proof* that any thing they have stated is either *false or erroneous*, or *ignorant*, they must decline inserting such abuse in their pages.

Edin. Nov. 8th 1815.

* ["If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone,"]

To the Editors of the Christian Herald.

Paisley, 29th Nov. 1815.

GENTLEMEN,

Your note of the 8th current, in reply to my letter of the 28th Oct. astonished me exceedingly. There was perhaps never a letter more completely misunderstood—either as to its nature, spirit, or tendency. Surely you must have been under strong irritation of mind when you read it, else you never could have discovered in it any abuse, either said or implied. You collect three words and so misplace them as to make them appear to mean something wholly different from my intention. You seem also to have taken up an idea that I was seeking after the means of making you out to be false accusers in the charge you have made against our connexions, as to sinful amusements, and that I intended to deny it. Now, so far from this being the case, my motive was, (and I still think you might have seen it) to bring to light the transgressors, that their deeds might be reproved. I by no means called in question the truth of your assertion; but rather believed it—and if any thing like indignation occupied my mind, it was not against you, but against ourselves—and am still ready to express my thankfulness, if you would be so good as inform me what the cases are unto which you allude. You have indeed in your note done away the *criminal* part of the charge. If I can rightly apprehend, there is a vast difference betwixt *public* amusements and the *vain and sinful* amusements of this world;—but probably you put *all* amusements under the latter designation, for you call *public* amusements "countenancing iniquity." (this is a fair inference from your note),—and if you do so, then we are at odds in point of opinion, rather than in point of practice. But I do not wish to take any undue advantage, rather supposing that what your note contains is only a lapse of the pen. You refused to publish my letter because it contained *no proof* of what I alledged. Certainly it did not—but it gave intimation of what I intended to prove. I now send you herewith a letter, in answer to your Review, and being confident it contains what is necessary to obtain for it a place in your pages, I expect you will let it find room in the next and succeeding number, if too long for one:—But if you are disposed to reject it, I beg you will be so good as return it—in time not exceeding eight days. I

hope you will not be more deficient in liberality than the respectable Editor of the Quarterly Magazine, who, in Reviewing a pamphlet of Mr. Lawson's, Selkirk, says, vol. I. page 234—" We will very readily publish any explanation or argument, which he or his friends choose to send us on the subject; most freely allowing to him, the same right to defend his views, which we claim and exercise in condemning them." I request that either the whole or none of my answer be published, and I beg leave to subscribe myself,

GENTLEMEN,

Yours, with regard,

JAMES M'GAVIN.

Mr. M'Gavin.

Edin. Dec. 6th —15.

DEAR SIR,

We return you the enclosed according to your own directions. After reading it carefully, we think you could scarcely expect its insertion in the Herald. The extraneous matter it contains, together with its direct attacks upon our denomination, render it abundantly too long for us, if there were no other reason to lead to its rejection. We wish you had not forbidden us to print any part of it, as we would have extracted those parts in which you controvert what you consider the mis-statements of the Reviewer; and if you still think that we have published unjust accusations against your denomination, and will send us a brief reply to those parts of our Review, in which you think we are wrong in point of fact, not of opinion, we will insert it.

We are, with Christian regards,

Yours &c.

THE EDITORS OF THE

CHRISTIAN HERALD.

J. NEILSON, PRINTER.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE

CHAPEL AT WINE WALL,

NEAR

COLNE;

On LORD'S DAY, SEPTEMBER 30th,

1810.

By William Edmondson.

AND NOW PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF HIS HEARERS.

COLNE.

PRINTED AND SOLD BY H. EARNSHAW,

1812.

A SERMON,

I. Timothy, iii. Chapter, 16 Verse.

AND WITHOUT CONTROVERSY GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS: GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH, JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT, SEEN OF ANGELS, PREACHED UNTO THE GENTILES, BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD, RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

THE Doctrine of the incarnation is a topic of such moment, that without the knowledge of it there can be no salvation; therefore amongst the followers of the Lamb it will admit of no controversy.

The first thing that offers itself for our consideration is the word mystery, and as men vary in their explanations of this word, our noticing what use is made of it in Scripture is the more necessary. The word mystery as used in the Scripture appears to be a relative term, and much like the word interpretation, or the word anti-type. And also as some understand this word to be the hidden sense of a figure, we may venture to illustrate it by a few portions of Divine Revelation. I. Cor. xv. 51. "Behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." The mystery here appears to be the translation of Enoch and Elijah as a type, and all that will be alive at our Saviour's coming the anti-type. Our Lord explains this word in the same sense in Rev. i. 20. "The mystery of the seven stars

which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." In order to explain what is meant by the mystery of Godliness, we mention the appearance of God in a human form, to Joshua, Abraham, &c. which appear as preludes to the future incarnation of Jehovah; or God manifest in the flesh.—In speaking from the words already read over, we will treat them in the following manner; first, prove a matter of fact that lieth in the text, viz. God was manifest in the flesh; secondly shew the reason or cause why he was manifest in the flesh; and afterwards notice the five following particulars in the order they stand in the Text. viz. what is meant by him being justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Now to prove that God was manifest in the flesh.—It is proved by his works: the creation of the world is ascribed unto him; "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And lest any should think of a superior Deity to that God which appeared in our nature, for our information, let us consult the Oracles of God. The psalmist informs us that "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth." The apostle John tells us who this word was, John i. 14. "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace

and truth." And to support this truth we will advert to the predictions of the prophets, Isaiah ix. 6. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." And again Isaiah viii. 13, 14. "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." These metaphors at once suggest to us who is intended; for no other can be intended than that stone which was set at nought by the Jewish builders. Every real christian will look upon our present subject as most glorious and interesting to mankind; for if we cannot prove our nature in union with God, there is no chance for salvation for any of the race of Adam. Seeing then that this subject is of such vast importance, we will endeavour to produce stronger evidence from the Scripture, in order to console the minds of all those who believe this salutary truth, and to stop the mouths of those who are enemies to sound Doctrine, and oppose the Divinity of the despised Nazarene. The evangelical prophet Isaiah when speaking of the appearance of God incarnate, in Chap. xl. ver. 10, 11. says, "Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the

lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." They must have a strange method of interpretation who can deny the application of these words to him who speaks in John's Gospel x. 11. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." In order to corroborate what has been already advanced see Micah v. 2. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings have been from of old, from everlasting." The more we search the Scriptures, the more we shall see the inspired penmen maintaining that human and divine nature constituted the Christ of God. So all confirm that soul reviving truth, God was manifest in the flesh; which leads us to our second proposition, viz. To shew the reason or cause, why he was manifest in the flesh.

The apostle Paul, when writing to his son Timothy, assigns a cogent reason why he was manifest in the flesh, I. Tim. i. 15. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." The necessity of God being manifest in the flesh will appear more plainly, if we consider the situation of man by nature. Psalm xiv. 2, 3. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth

good, no, not one." It appears from this and many other scriptures that man by the fall not only lost his primeval purity, but also his strength; yet the Lord has promised, and his promises cannot fail, that he would send a Saviour and a great one, and he should deliver them: Rom. v. 6. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." The apostle in these verses sets forth the deplorable situation man is in by nature; and after telling this awful and sad truth he confirms it in another part of the same Epistle iv. 18. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." From this description of man's situation, it appears necessary that one should arise superior to all created existence, one who was able to deliver him from a dilemma so awfully deplorable. But this could never have been effected by any being inferior to God manifest in the flesh: who speaks thus by the prophet Isaiah lxiii. 4, 5. "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my

redeemed is come. And I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." In the dolorous scene of sorrow waded through by the man of God's right hand; two things appear to our view. First the heinous nature of sin. Secondly the inflexible justice of God. God is always represented in the Scripture, as a being of infinite purity. And from the same source we learn, that "the heavens are not clean in his sight, and his angels he charged with folly." When the son of his love appeared in our world, clothed in our nature, and loaded with our sins; the holiness and justice of the law giver, could not spare the darling of God's soul; for, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." A man in a certain place hath said, (and which is much to the point on the present occasion,) "That the vast store of vengeance treasured up by sinful men against the day of wrath, was now opened by the hands of divine justice, down it rushed with remorseless fury on the devoted Surety of Mankind; and invading his spirit it filled him with deadly sorrow. The acute sensation burst through his lips in a pathetic complaint to his three favourites; "now is my soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death, tarry ye here and watch." Now was the time when he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, to him that was able to save him from death; and was heard in that he feared. Though he laid not long under the power of the grave, yet he could not be exempt from suffering. For

the Scripture saith, that "this captain of our salvation must be made perfect through sufferings." This glorious sun of righteousness experienced a sad but short eclipse; but, it is now risen to set no more. And this will bring us to the first particular, viz. to enquire what is meant by him being justified in the spirit. Now we are to consider how the immaculate Lamb of God, in whose mouth guile was never found, can with propriety be said to be justified in the spirit; for as the text declares, God was manifest in the flesh, which shews his state of humiliation. And on the other hand, being justified in the spirit, proves him triumphant over the grave, spoiling principalities and powers, and making a shew of them openly;—in his resurrection from the dead. The word justified, here signifies our Saviour's acquital from all the accusations they falsely charged him with. For the controversy betwixt our Saviour and the Jews was, whether he was the Messiah so long spoken of by the prophets, or, an Imposter. Our Lord claimed the first and not only so but also claimed equality with God; which the Jews construed into blasphemy, and said, "thou being a man makest thyself God." To which we find he answers in John x. 35, 36. "If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the son of God?" The Jews did not put our Saviour to death on account of his being a good man, but; for blaspheming and taking to

himself that honour which is due to God alone; for had he not been Jehovah's fellow, as the Jewish law condemned the blasphemer to be stoned to death, they would then only have acted agreeably thereto. And this seems what they had in view, if we may judge by their conversation with Pilate; they say, "we have a law, and by our law he ought to die! because he made himself the son of God." This controversy carried on betwixt our Saviour and the Jews, was to be decided by his resurrection. So he appeared to be justified from these false accusations, when God brought back from the dead, the great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Even a guilty criminal, who died by the side of this Prince of life, justified the Messiah; for, says he to his fellow criminal, "we are suffering justly for our crimes, but this man (meaning Jesus) hath done nothing amiss." As the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a capital point of doctrine, and makes so great a figure in the apostolic writings, we will take up a little more time in discussing a topic which gave ocular demonstration that our Saviour was justified in the Spirit. The apostle Paul in I. Cor. xv. 4. says, that "he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." And if we consider Hosea vi. 1, 2. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." It appears that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is intended,

and we may notice two wonderful transactions that are recorded in the Scripture which seem to be typically setting forth the same thing. First the deliverance of Isaac when his father was going to slay him. For the three days they travelled together, Isaac was looked upon by his father as a dead child; being fully determined to obey the command of God. These three days are a faint emblem of the three days and nights that Jesus Christ lay in the heart of the earth. There can be nothing more plain than this, that Isaac was a type of him in whom all nations were to be blessed. But behold, a change in the figure, all the three days he was a type of Jesus Christ; but, when God called to Abraham, saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad;" then he became a type of the Church, and the ram caught in the thicket, took his former place as a type of Christ, which ram was taken and offered by Abraham for a burnt offering. The second transaction we proposed to mention is not less wonderful than the former. Jonah the prophet who attempted in his disobedience to fly from the presence of the Lord, and instead of implicitly obeying his maker's command, he fled to a distant part, where he had no authority from the command of God to go: and therefore, God being determined to punish his disobedience in an exemplary manner, he caused a storm to arise, so that the mariners in the ship (in which Jonah lay fast asleep) were in jeopardy of their lives. But for the sake of brevity we will pass over part of these transactions in silence, and return to the mariners, who, at Jonah's re-

quest cast him over board. Now Jonah's master being Lord over both sea and land, commanded a fish to swallow him up, where he lay three days and three nights. Our Saviour speaks of it thus, "as Jonah was three days and three nights in the Whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The truth of Christ's resurrection has an unshaken foundation in the Bible. The apostle Paul produces many witnesses who were living when he wrote his first Epistle to the church at Corinth; he also mentions his having been seen by above five hundred brethren at one time, the greater part of whom were still alive, but some were fallen asleep. There was a sufficient number of witnesses here to support a good cause; but as our Saviour rose not as a single person, but as the representative of all those for whom he poured out his soul unto death! the apostle Paul intimates that he rose as the head of his body the church, I. Cor. xv. 20. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Here we find an allusion to the first ripe sheaf in the Jewish harvest which the apostle seems to intend as a type of Jesus Christ. This sheaf came first out of the earth, was the first ripe, was of the most excellent quality, and insured the remainder of the harvest: so in like manner the resurrection of Jesus Christ insured the resurrection of all his followers. Our blessed Lord argues from his own life to the life of all believers, when he says, "Because I live ye shall live also;" from which we may justly conclude

that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a very consolatory point of doctrine, to all those who repose their confidence in him, whom God hath raised from the dead, and given him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. It will already appear to those who make the Bible their rule, that enough has been said to prove the resurrection of Christ a doctrine of Scripture; for, could this be overthrown, all that Christ hath done would fall to the ground. But to proceed to the second particular, viz. What is meant by him being seen of angels?

We need not doubt but ever since the creation of angels he has been seen of them; but what appears here to be chiefly intended, is, the angels seeing him, after his incarnation; a sight which would astonish these celestial beings, when they beheld their creator veil his glory in a nature inferior to their own: for the apostle Peter informs us, that this mystery the angels desire to look into. He was first seen of angels at his birth, when the child born and son given, so long spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, made his appearance in this our world, a winged messenger from the highest heaven was dispatched to earth to proclaim the birth of this wonderful child, who was a non-such in the whole creation of God, to a few shepherds that were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night, "And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the Angel said unto them, fear not; for, be-

hold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the Heavenly Hosts, praising God and saying glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." So we may plainly see that God manifest in the flesh was seen of angels, and who, with astonishment and alacrity obey that high command expressed in the following words, "and let all the angels of God worship him." Thus it appears that the angels are formed into one worshipping society with the saints, who all worship that crucified God-Man, who is now alive in the midst of the throne. He was likewise seen of angels in his temptation in the wilderness; after he had overcome temptation and vanquished the tempter: behold, angels came and ministered unto him. He was seen of angels in his agony in the garden, where he sweat great drops of blood which fell down to the ground, and at the same time poured out of his resigned heart, the language of perfect submission to his father's will, saying, "Father, if it be possible, remove this cup from me, nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." What must be the thoughts of his disciples, when they saw their divine Master crawling like a worm and no man, in the garden of Gethsemane; and what must angels think, who, were fully sensible of his divinity; while they wondered at the unfathomable depth of his design. What resentment must fire them at the affront offered by Ju-

das and the multitude to their Master and their God; doubtless they waited around him, not only to pry into this astonishing transaction; but also to testify their readiness to revenge him at command. One hint only from the dispised Jesus, would have been the ruin not only of these miscreants, but of the whole system of nature: more than ten legions of angels would have appeared to his aid, and declared their abhorence of this devilish plot, by the most alarming display of power and vengeance. He was likewise seen of angels at his resurrection; when the disciples came to the sepulchre, some of his attendants from the upper world were there, and addressed them thus, "why seek ye the living among the dead, he is not here, he is risen, come see the place where the Lord lay." He was also seen of angels, when he ascended into heaven, Acts i. 9. After some conversation with his disciples he was taken up while they beheld, and a cloud received him out of their sight; and while they looked stedfastly towards heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. It certainly appears from various parts of the Scriptures, that a great number of angels attended his ascension into glory. Psalm lxviii. 17, 18. "The Chariots of God, are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captiv-

ity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." The Psalmist speaks also in another place, in the following manner, on this delightful topic; "God is gone up with a shout, and the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." And as the middle wall of partition, betwixt Jew and Gentile was then broken down, Salvation was to be declared unto the Gentiles. And this will lead us on to the third Particular, viz. Preached unto the Gentiles.

The gospel being preached unto the Gentiles, would no doubt appear a mystery unto the Jews. But we find the apostle explaining this in Eph. iii. 5, 6. "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit, That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel." The apostle Peter we find was the person who was first entrusted with the keys of the kingdom of heaven; to open or unfold the mystery of the gospel, to the Jews first, as in Acts ii. and also to the Gentiles; though his knowledge seems very contracted before the Vision, Acts x. 11 to 16. wherein, he "Saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth; wherein were all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, and there came a voice to him, rise Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, not so,

Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven." By this Vision we are taught that there is now no distinction betwixt clean and unclean beasts. But the distinction here mentioned, had no doubt principally a respect unto the distinction, that then was betwixt the Jews and Gentiles. For the Jews looked upon the Gentiles as unclean, "but here, (Peter says,) God hath shewed me, that I should not call any man common or unclean." Peter now spoke in the same strain as when he said, "of a truth, I perceive God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." A minute examination of the distinction before mentioned, might perhaps have prevented the false constructions that have sometimes been put on it. We might quote numbers of passages concerning the calling of the Gentiles, but at present a few shall suffice, and amongst others we mention Isaiah liv. 1, 2, 3. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the

left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." The apostle Paul was the chosen apostle of the Gentiles; and he faithfully fulfilled his office by declaring the gospel both to Jews and Gentiles. But the Jews were so enraged at the multitudes who came to hear him, that they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul; contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said; "it was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal Life believed. And this brings us to the fourth particular, viz. his being believed on in the world.

It would be natural enough for some to say, who would not believe a truth; but as the gospel is a supernatural revelation, no one can believe it, without the demonstration of the spirit and power of God. We know that great disputes have arisen in the religious world, respecting what that faith is, which was once delivered to the saints. Some say, it is to believe that Christ loved me and gave himself for me. But as faith has always respect unto a testimony; and as no such testimony is declared concerning any indi-

vidual, this cannot be the faith spoken of; consequently it must be something else. Whatever truth is declared, the belief of which truth stands in connection with salvation; we must conclude, that, the believing this testimony or truth declared, bids fairest to be the faith in question. But by way of illustration we will notice what Paul says when writing to the Romans, Chap. i. 16, 17. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith." Rom. x. 9, 10. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." I. John v. 1. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." Lest any should be deceived by supposing themselves in possession of this faith, when at the same time they are strangers to the effects produced by it, let us attend to the apostle when speaking of this faith with its effects. Gal. v. 6. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." The love here mentioned is a fruit of the new birth, flowing immediately from true faith, and is never, nor ever can be, separated

from it. We read of some professors of the truth perishing, because they received not the love of the truth; and this is made an evidence of their not believing it. This love fixes the mind of the believer, on Christ, by way of esteem, valuing him above all things and counting all besides him, that is all things that stand in competition with him, but loss and dung: so that he appears to the believer altogether lovely. As faith is the bond of the christian's union, so love, which is the immediate effect of this faith, flows towards all those who are of the truth, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. The apostle John saith, "whosoever seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwells the love of God in him." We will conclude this particular by a description of true religion which the apostle James gives us. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." From the apostle's mentioning the fatherless and widows, we may suppose affliction and distress of various kinds is intended; and it is the duty of all who profess to have faith in Christ, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. This practice our saviour commanded, and if we are partakers of the faith once delivered to the saints, this practice will be a great proof of our being interested in him; who though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man

soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." We now come to the last particular in the text, which ought not to be passed over in silence. viz. His being received up into glory.

As the manner in which our Saviour entered into heaven has no parallel, it will perhaps not be improper to notice the claim he makes to that kingdom which he was then about to take possession of. Psalm xxiv. 7 to 10. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be lift up ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in Battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Our Saviour Jesus Christ, even in his state of humiliation, claimed equality with his Father. The Scripture informs us, that after he was received up into glory, his equality with the father still appeared. Heb. i. 3. "When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." That he had not a superior even in heaven we may learn from the Scripture, as he testified to his disciples while here, saying, "I and my father are one." Therefore there can be no superiority or inferiority in the Godhead; for the same ascriptions of glory are given to the slain Lamb, who appeared on mount Sion, as to the Father.

And in Rev. vii. 17. "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." We trust sufficient hath been said to prove, our glorious Forerunner who is now within the veil, hath all power given unto him both in heaven and in earth.

We therefore shall next enquire into some of the blessings that accrue to mortals through his reception into heaven. And first we mention the communication opened from earth to heaven, which may be compared to Jacob's ladder, Gen. xxviii. 12. "And behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Our Lord evidently admits this ladder as a type of himself when speaking to Nathanael, John i. 51. "And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Whilst Jesus Christ was in a state of humiliation, the angels of God descended to strengthen him. But since he was exalted, and had a name given above every name, and hath ascended his glorious throne in the highest heavens; the angels have now to ascend unto him, who is the brightness of his Father's Glory. And when these glorious messengers appear in his presence, they veil their faces and fly at his command. The apostle when speaking of these blessings in Heb. xii. 22, 23, says, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and

unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." It probably might be useful to enquire, how these happy spirits, who have arrived on Sion's Hill could be made more perfect than they were. We doubt not but they were happy, yet something they believed while here was still to accomplish. Abraham believed, that in his seed, should all the families of the earth be blessed. And when our exalted redeemer came to his throne, then Abraham saw his seed in full possession of all the glory of the upper world; and so was the spirit of this just man made perfect in the sense herein intended. David now also saw his Son and Lord who was to reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of whose Kingdom there should be no end. The saints that are upon earth, can only be said to come to those in heaven, by faith, in the same sense as in Heb. xii. 24. "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." But by way of conclusion, let us notice what the apostle says when encouraging the followers of the Lamb. Heb. iv. 14. "Seeing then that we have a great high Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. This exhortation is a very suitable one, for all those who profess to fight under the banner of the Captain of our Salvation. Doubt-

less the Church of Jesus Christ hath many enemies; many indeed there are, who would gladly deprive any of its members of the Pearl of great price. Our Saviour gives the following caution to one of the Churches, Rev. iii. 11. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." We see from these Scriptures, the necessity of standing upon our watch tower, in a defensive posture, against false teachers, who would rob Christ of his honour, which all false doctrine has a tendency to do; and so far as we can submit to hear Christ dishonoured, so far we have let go our profession, and if persisted in, will, undoubtedly prove we are not valiant for the truth. Another reason why it is necessary we should hold fast our profession, is, because the eyes of our risen Redeemer are constantly upon us. And what ought still more to stimulate us to our duty is the shortness of the warfare; for it is but a little while and he that shall come will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. And happy will that man be, who believes to the saving of his soul.



H. EARNSHAW, PRINTER, COLNE.

FUNERAL SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY

The DEATH of Mr. FLEETWOOD CHURCHILL,

PREACHED BY

Mr. John Green,

at the

CHAPEL, IN MARY GATE,

Nottingham,

Lord's Day Afternoon, 19th May

1811.

COLNE:

PRINTED BY H. EARNSHAW.

1811.

FUNERAL SERMON.

REVELATIONS, Chapter 14, Verse 13.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

ON such solemn and awful occasions, it is not our practice to flatter, or to speak in praise of the dead; it is rather our office to address ourselves to the living; therefore we shall only make the following remarks. Our dear departed friend and brother, made a very early profession of the gospel; "remember thy creator in the days of thy youth," and that "from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." At early days he espoused the preaching of the Gospel, that he was exceedingly assiduous in his studies, in his reading and in his labours. His leisure time was occupied in reading the bible, in order that he might be useful to others. I remark farther, that in his preaching he held forth the unsearchable riches of Christ, as the only salvation of sinners. He spared no pains, no labours, in endeavouring to spread this cause; and all this with the utmost freedom, without any salary, emolument, or advantage whatever. He was liberal to a great degree, always ready to do good, to relieve the oppressed, the indigent and the afflicted. We may observe that his race was short, his labours short, his warfare short, and his conflict short. Yet we may observe, that his preaching of the gospel, to his last period, was clear. He owned Jesus to be his only hope and ground of confidence; and we may say, thus far, these words will apply to him, "*Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*" For at the close of life he professed his faith in the gospel, and *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, &c.*

In making a few remarks, we first notice death. Secondly, the triumph over death. Thirdly, take

notice of the life of faith; and in the last place, make a few remarks respecting the consummation of all things. *Blessed*, saith the eternal God, *are the dead which die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit.*

First, Make a few remarks respecting a subject which is common. We hear of it, we see it almost every day.

All flesh is grass, and all the beauty of man is as the flower of the field; it is appointed unto all men once to die; and we are all mortal, dying men, always hastening to the grave. Here we have no continuing city. The promises of youth invigorated with health and strength, appear fair; yet how uncertain the continuance: we have not a moment to call our own, all the glory of man is as the flower of grass, the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, and the beauty thereof falleth to the ground; but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever. The cause of death is the sin of one man; Adam was the parent of sin, and all have sinned in him: "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Death reigns over all, even infants, who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, are subject unto it; and as all sinned in him, we must all die. We are always travelling to the gates of the grave: with respect to the time, it is appointed in the annals of heaven. We have no length of time in ourselves; if we arrive at seventy years, yet this is labour and sorrow; but how few attain to this age; and how soon it passes over those who have arrived at sixty or seventy years of age; say how short it is! Our days are always passing with a thousand attending vexations. Under all these circumstances we are travelling to the gates of the grave, to the house appointed for all living. There is a serious and important consideration in these things; that is, the future happiness or misery attending on this; "he that believeth shall be saved." But what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. We read of one rich man, that he died, was buried; and in Hell he lifted up his eyes. We read of a poor man that he died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. A life of happiness always stands connected with a life of faith, with the government of grace.

Rebellion stands connected with misery, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience. At the last day, he says, many shall rise, those who turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. But many shall rise to shame and everlasting confusion. How great and important then are eternal things! what a trifle is the present world! How vain, how unprofitable are all its pleasures; they are not to be compared to eternal glory. All the glory of heaven is laid up for those who love the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul says, while we look not at the things which are seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. This leads us to the second general observation, which is, to remark the victory obtained by the second Adam. He came into the world that we might have life, and that more abundantly. The apostle says, those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in glory by one Jesus Christ. And again he says, that as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ came into the world as our friend, and he assumed our weakness; he became our surety, our gracious redeemer. He came to destroy the works of Satan. Our sins were all laid upon him. The father says he came to do his will; all our iniquities were laid upon him: and by his stripes we were healed. He redeemed our souls from death, our eyes from tears, our feet from falling, by the sufferings which he endured. He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He made his soul an offering for sin, that he might see his seed, and that the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in his hand. He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. Men have sinned, but Christ is the sufferer. Men enjoy the pleasures of sin, but Christ the pain belonging to our transgressions. He was made a curse for us, and gave himself for our iniquities, that he might redeem us from the curse of the divine law. In redemption's work he abounded to us in all wisdom and prudence. He gave himself

for us that he might redeem us from the curse of his broken covenant. He paid the dreadful debt, and the last words that our Lord spoke upon the cross, were these; it is finished. We rejoice in Christ Jesus, by whom we have received the atonement. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son. Christ is the almighty saviour; by dying he hath abolished death, and by dying he hath brought life and immortality to light, to lift us up on high, to behold his love for ever. We know that Jesus rose from the dead, to shew us the way to life. He rose from the dead, and in consequence of this shall all his live with him. Paul says, that those who are reconciled by his death, shall live by his life. He is able to save to the uttermost every one that cometh to God by him. Boundless compassion fills his heart; his compassion is still the same; and he is sufficient to justify the ungodly from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. Here is the sure foundation laid in Zion. If we behold the first Adam laying the world in ruins, by sin; here is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, to raise those ruins. Behold the first Adam dying, and bringing death to all his posterity; we likewise behold the second Adam dying and rising again, and bringing life and immortality to light. The second Adam is the Lord from heaven, a quickning spirit, the king in Zion, the horn of salvation. We cannot have too little confidence in ourselves; nor too much in the saviour. When he brings us to the close of life, what confidence can we have; But while we view our own faith, we must also view the death of Christ. He died, and we must die also. We must die because of Adam's sin; Christ died, not only to put away the sin of Adam, but also to atone for sin, yea, all the thousands of transgressions and sins of his people. When we walk through the dark valley, which we all must soon pass through; we should consider the glorious redemption of Jesus. When we view his death, we view the sacrifice, the immaculate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. If we have lived in the faith, we can say, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for

mine eyes have seen thy salvation." *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labour, and their works do follow them.*

This leads us then in the third place, to make a few observations respecting the faith of believers. If we believe that Christ died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Christ, will God bring with him. They must have fellowship with God, they must have communion with Christ. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. The work of the Redeemer is for their salvation. He brought salvation to men, he brought in an everlasting righteousness and salvation, that men might be partakers of this; and all that believe the gospel, are made the righteousness of God in Christ, and stand complete in him. We may observe that this religion is a living religion and a dying religion. If we are believers, we live by faith, and every day of our lives, we view, by faith, the death of Jesus. We view the immaculate life of Christ, and his eternal redemption. This takes away guilt from our consciences. At the same time that Jesus took away sin, he shewed thee, O man, what is good; to take away sin in a full dependance on grace, a full dependance on the work of Christ. Paul expresses himself thus: I live, saith he, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. This corresponds with other declarations in the new testament. Those who are justified by faith, live on the fulness of Jesus; and rejoice in hope of the divine glory. Paul expresses himself in the fifth Chapter of Romans, Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and again, we glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope. We may observe then, that a life of faith is connected with the joy of hope. Hope is an anticipation of good things to come. We know that there is a life to come; we know that this world will soon be brought to an end. Heaven and earth shall pass away. We know also, that there will be a new heaven and a new earth; wherein dwelleth righteousness. We, by the hope of

the gospel, anticipate the glories that shall be in this world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we draw near the gates of death, we draw near the gates of heaven. Respecting those who are near the gates of death, in bending old age; the apostle says: we know that if our house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. They are going then to enjoy the divine presence. We know that death and heaven are always connected; absent from the body, present with the Lord. They have a house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The apostle Paul says, I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. How happy then to enjoy the smiles of heaven, and the light of God's countenance. David, when he speaks of this, says, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me. And respecting saints, it is said; the righteous are taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace. They shall rest in their beds; each one walking in his righteousness.

This leads then, in the last place, just to make a few remarks further on this blessed text. *I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* We may suppose that a blessed death is superior to any thing we can enjoy upon earth: Paul decided this. While Paul was upon earth, he enjoyed God and the light of his countenance; and yet he knew that heaven was far superior to this. I have a desire to depart, says he, and be with Christ which is far better. To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Paul lived and preached the Gospel, and mingled his tears with the afflicted; to comfort christians and to warn them: here was

Christ, here was his life; but he knew there was a something that was far better than this; to be with Christ was far better. Hence it is said, *they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.* Let us observe then, a faithful, diligent, and laborious servant of God; serving the Lord with all patience and delight; and enduring much for his name's sake. In this life there is much peace; "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." The paths of the gospel, and the peace of the gospel, are always connected: and while believers labour in that vineyard, while they abound in his wages, there is great peace. Godliness with contentment is great gain; it is a glorious and an abundant profit. But here he says *they rest from their labours;* what ever they were they cease. We have an instance in Dorcas; she died and they shewed the coats and garments she had made for the poor. In death she ceased from these labours. If we behold a faithful minister of the gospel, travelling, preaching the gospel, holding forth the riches of divine grace; all these labours must cease; there is a voice that says; all thy labours must cease from the service of God. Their service is now near the throne, they are not in houses of clay, they are under the altar, in the presence of the eternal king, beholding his face. We lament the departure of friends; but while they are gone, they are not lost; they are gone to the general assembly and church of the first born, who are written in heaven. Thus the glorious assembly are always replenishing: there is no death there, no war, no calamity, None who arrive at this happy mansion ever quit their station; they are pillars in the temple of their God. Those who remain in the church of God on earth; are frequently impaired in their nature; not so above, he is accomplishing the interest of his elect. He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. Henceforth, therefore, they must cease from their labours, from all their troubles, from all the sorrows of life. They are buried in oblivion; they are lost in eternity. They shall return, he says, to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain gladness

and joy. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away. This is the hope, this the reward of all his saints; their works do follow them. We must observe that the works that follow them, are not the cause of their salvation; but to them he has promised a reward, I was hungry and ye gave me meat, thirsty and ye gave me drink, naked and ye clothed me, sick and in prison and ye visited me. Thus there is a full reward for all our labour. Gather my saints together those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. The heavens shall declare his righteousness; for god is judge himself. And thus shall all his dear followers be brought into his presence; and all their labours, and all their sorrows shall be rewarded; and they shall proclaim all to be by free grace; and grace shall shine upon the throne for ever and ever. In a few words; our time is short; death is coming; the life to come is important; there is one truth to save us; one way of salvation. If we are followers of the Lamb, we shall soon enter into our graves, where the wicked shall cease from troubling; and where the weary shall be at rest; the spirit shall wing its way to the eternal throne of the assembly of the upright: where they shall all sing the praises of him who washed them from their sins in his own blood; and made them kings and priests to God, and to his father; to whom be glory for ever and ever.



EARNSHAW, PRINTER, COLNE.

AN

ATTEMPT

TO ANSWER

THE FOLLOWING QUERIES:

"Did Christ die for the sins of all Men, or for a part of the sins of all Men, or for all the sins of a definite number of Men, or will those be culpable who are excluded the benefit of his death if they neglect to believe that Christ died for them, or in other words, if they believe not a lie."

IN A LETTER

TO THE QUEREST.

COLNE:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY H. EARNSHAW, AND MAY BE HAD OF THE AUTHOR.

1815.

ADVERTISEMENT.



THE following Letter was written in answer to a note containing the preceding queries, and sent to an acquaintance of the writer's requesting a reply. As it was written hastily, without the most remote idea to its publication, the reader must not be surprised to find many inaccuracies in its composition. These, however, are but of minor importance in comparison with the doctrines it contains, which the writer wishes to be tried by the word of God, with which he hopes they will be found consistent.

As a few of his friends, with whom he is connected in the public profession of those doctrines, were desirous of possessing copies of it, they requested the writer to publish it, to which request, as he saw no good reason to object, he was induced to comply.

If it should by the blessing of God prove a means of leading any from that blind devotion to MEN and SYSTEMS, which the scriptures so much condemn, but which is so awfully prevalent, the writer will consider himself happy in having written it.

COLNE, November 30th, 1814.

To JAMES HARGREAVES,

A NOTE, with your name affixed to it, was put into my hands by Samuel Siddall, containing certain questions to which you request a reply. As they are questions on which the scriptures are very explicit with his consent, I shall attempt to answer your request. Your first question is, "Did Christ die for the sins of all men?" To this I would reply in the most decisive negative; he did not. You next inquire, "Did he die for a part of the sins of all men?" I make the same reply to this as to the preceding question. Your next inquiry is, "Did he die for all the sins of a definite number?" This inquiry I would answer in the affirmative, and as this involves the two preceding questions, I shall attempt to answer it more at large, by stating some of the evidences in support of the opinion.

Were the opinion of Samuel Siddall, all that you required you have it in the preceding answers. But what is the opinion of any man or number of men on those momentous subjects. Does not scripture call upon us to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils. (*a*) On such grounds the christian disdains to rest his important interests. With the prophet, he says "to the law and to the testimony." (*b*) And with the apostle: "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." (*c*) He recollects the solemn language of his divine master: "the words that I have spoken to you they shall judge you at the last day." (*d*) The writer, in unison with these sentiments, rejects with abhorence, every other standard of doctrine and practice but the sacred records. Under this conviction, he would, out of the abundance of proofs which the scriptures afford, advance the following passages in confirmation of his opinion. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed, &c." "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Isaiah liii, 10 and 11. Is it not evident from these passages that his death or atonement is restricted to his seed and to the travail of his soul. Say if the Redeemer's soul hath travailed for the sins of all mankind would he express his satisfaction at seeing his seed; or as they are in other passages called heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, suffering eternal punishment? But they are joint heirs with Jesus Christ, so that they are not likely to want company. It is enough to make one shudder to state the horrible idea. The Majesty of heaven an heir of eternal torments!!

(*a*) Isaiah ii. 22. (*b*) Isaiah viii. 21. (*c*) Gal. i. 8. (*d*) John xii. 48.

What audacious blasphemy. * Dare men maintain such sentiments? How gross the ignorance, and how great the wickedness of the human heart! Dare any affirm that the one perfect offering, which Jesus offered without spot to God, and by which he hath perfected them that are sanctified, is not effectual? (*c*) Is the blood of Jesus of less efficacy than the blood of a calf or a heifer, which could sanctify to the purifying of the flesh?!! Nay verily how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge the consciences of those for whom it was shed, from dead works to serve the living and true God. (*f*) But to proceed: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;" John vi. 37. This passage implies the certain salvation of all that the Father should give to him. And surely it will not be maintained that the Father hath given all mankind to the son. Again: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded;" Rom. xi. 7. Here by the term election is to be understood a definite number of men chosen from among mankind, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, (*g*) that they should be holy and without blame before him in love: (*h*) even those who are predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, and for this exalted end the praise of the glory of the grace of God. (*i*) These are his sheep, (*j*) who are called and made willing in the day of his power, (*k*) to hear his voice. To these he gives not fancied fleeting tastes of the word of God, but eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. (*l*) These are the called according to his, (that is God's), purpose for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. (*m*) Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? How vain and futile the charge. It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, &c.

To contend that the election includes all mankind, is too absurd an opinion to need refutation. He who maintains this sentiment, not only demonstrates his ignorance of scripture, but his want of common sense.

But my limits admonish me to proceed. In further proof of my answer, I shall quote you two passages. "To him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God;" Rev. i. 5 and 6. Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation:" Rev. v. 9. Here you will observe that every kindred and tongue, &c, are not redeemed, but God's people are redeemed out of them.

* The word "unparallelled" was used in the original copy, it was the intention of the writer to alter it, but it was sent off in his absence.

(*c*) Heb. x. 14. (*f*) Heb. ix. 14. (*g*) 2 Tim. i. 9. (*h*) Eph. i. 4. (*i*) Eph. i. 5 and 6. (*j*) John x. 3.—(*k*) xi. 3. (*l*) John x. 28. (*m*) Rom. viii. 29, 30, and 33.

These are but a few of the numerous passages, which might be brought in support of the doctrine here contended for, but I consider them sufficient to satisfy the person whose conscience is in subjection to the word of him who cannot lie. I am well aware that these are unpopular doctrines. The wisdom of God levels all the boasted wisdom of men with the dust. (*n*) Yea the world by wisdom knows not God. (*o*) But this general rejection of these doctrines ought to be no cause of surprise to the christian. (*p*) He does, or ought to recollect, that the foundation which God has laid in Zion has been a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence in all ages, even to those who stumble at the *word*, being disobedient whereunto also they were appointed. (*q*) The christian recollects that the natural man understandeth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned, (*r*) He knows that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, (*s*) and such shall be the prevalence of false doctrine, that if it were possible they would deceive the very Elect, (*t*) but he consoles himself with the promise of God that the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal the Lord knoweth them that are his, (*u*) In these "perilous times" it is no uncommon thing to hear even the professors of religion, with unblushing effrontery, charging the Omnipotent Sovereign of the Universe, with unjustice and tyranny, nay even with being, (shall I repeat the infamous sentiment), with being worse than Satan himself if he do what he will with his own, or if he excercise his sovereignty in the disposal of his creatures. That very attribute of God which our Saviour reverences and adores, saying "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank thee that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight;" (*w*) the modern professors of his name blaspheme with the most wicked malignity. I wish this striking difference of opinion between them and him whom they profess to be their Lord and Master, may strike your judgement, and then you will be ready to say with an apostle: "Nay man, but who art thou that repliest against God?

Your next question is, "will those be culpable who are excluded the benefit of his death if they neglect to believe that Christ died for them, or in other words, if they believe not a lie." In reply to this question, I would observe first, "That all have sinned, and the whole world become guilty before God." (*x*) This shall suffice for the guilt or culpability of men, as it is a doctrine more generally admitted than some. Secondly, your question proceeds on what I consider a false or unscriptural supposition; viz. "that men are called to believe that Christ died for them in particular. I have yet to learn that men are called on to believe this. In what part of the sacred records is it to be found? It is no where said in them that Christ died for James Hargreaves, or Samuel Siddall. The scriptures declare that

(*n*) 1 Cor. iii. 19. (*o*) 1 Cor. i. 21. (*p*) John xvi. 2. (*q*) 1 Peter ii. 8.
(*r*) 1 Cor. ii. 14. (*s*) 2 Tim. iii. 13, (*t*) Matt. xxiv. 24.—Mark xiii. 22.
(*u*) 2 Tim. ii. 19. (*v*) 2 Tim. iii. 1. (*w*) Matt. xi. 25.—Luke 10. 21.
(*x*) Rom. iii. 19.

Christ died and rose again, and they connect eternal salvation with the believe of this, (*y*) without believing that Christ died for them. They declare that whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, (*z*) and shall not come into condemnation. (*a* 2) These you see are not falsehoods, but on the contrary are the most soul reviving truths. Far be it that the God of truth should call upon men to believe a falsehood, or charge them with culpability or guilt on that account. Those who know his character would tremble at such a horrible charge.

I am aware that the doctrine this answer contains is still more generally rejected than that contained in the preceding answers. This inconsistency of those who profess to hold particular redemption, has furnished their opponents with weapons against themselves. As my answer will shew that I abhor the doctrine as much as any one can, I leave the persons who maintain it to make their own defence. I know that even many of these will say that if we do not know our own individual election there is no hope for us. How these persons dare give the lie to the express word of God, which affirms that "he who believeth that Jesus s the Christ, is born of God, and shall not come into condemnation," I know not. This short, but explicit manner of stating the glorious gospel of salvation, is far from suiting its modern refiners. They will triumphantly tell us that all men, or men in general, believe this. But will they abide by the consequence of their assertion. "They are born of God, passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation" Nay, verily they will not. I would just observe on this most dangerous and destructive doctrine, that it leads men off the atonement, and rests their salvation on the belief of their individual election; a knowledge of which is only to be attained, by abounding in the fruits of the spirit of God, which dwells in every believer. (*b* 2) These are faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. (*c* 2) And by being diligent in the work of faith and labour of love, and in obedience to all our Lord's commandments. This sentiment leaves those who believe the gospel *only* without hope, while it secures the salvation of those who believe in their own election, or that Christ died for them, thus making the belief of their election of more consequence than the belief of the gospel. To this sentiment the true christian will say with the apostle: "and I unto the world." (*d* 2)

Thus, according to ability, I have attempted to answer your queries. The views of Samuel Siddall are in unison with those I have stated on those subjects. If I have mistaken your meaning, or failed to give the information you desired, I shall find a pleasure in communicating any further information in my power.

Yours, respectfully,

JAMES LAYCOCK.

(*y*) 1 Thess. iv. 14. (*z*) 1 John v. 1. (*a* 2) John v. 24. (*b* 2) Rom. viii. 9. [*c* 2]. 2 Peter i. 5. [*d* 2] Gal. vi. 14.

OBSERVATIONS

On the way which allows and authorizes the

CHURCHES OF CHRIST

TO DO ALL THINGS

WITHOUT PASTORS OR ELDERS,

AND PARTICULARLY

TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER.

COLNE:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY H. EARNSHAW.

1815.

OBSERVATIONS

On the way which allows and authorizes

THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST

To do all things without Pastors or Elders, and particularly to eat the Lord's Supper.

IT is allowed by the advocates of the above way, "That Elders are essentially necessary to the proper order and well-being of every church of Christ, and that to say otherwise is to impeach the wisdom, love and care of Christ towards his people; who has appointed the office, and described the characters who are to fill that office."

Now, if Christ gives his people being, in the spiritual sense and does not provide for their well-being; where is his love and care towards them?

It seems he gives them a life peculiar to themselves, but in very many cases withholds the means that are essentially necessary to their well-being in that life! Is this God's way of dealing with his creatures? In creation every thing was afforded that was essentially necessary to well-being; and ever since, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." But it seems there are a few who are peculiarly his own, on whose account the world is preserved, who are of all men most miserable as to things temporal; and while they live in this world, in very many instances, must be famished in things spiritual!!! Far be it that we should think thus, "yea let God be true, but every man a liar; he will be justified in his sayings, and overcome when he is judged."

God's word herein teaches quite the reverse, "I will give you Pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."* "And I will set up shepherds over them, which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed; neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord." To accomplish this, when Christ ascended upon high he had his hand filled with spiritual gifts to reconcile rebels, and to edify those so reconciled. Even all spiritual blessings, and all the fulness thereof; "for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."† To illustrate the view intended.—It was promised to Christ that he should see his seed, he should prolo

* Jer. iii. 15. and xxiii. 4. † Eph. i. 3. and 4, 8, 12.—Col. i. 19.

his days, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." Now Christ declares this shall be accomplished, when he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Hence it is plain that their well-being is as certain as their existence. Should any assert that the people which the Father gave to Christ shall certainly come to him; there is equal reason to assert, that they shall not be wanting in the gifts essentially necessary to their well-being; "for they shall not be lacking, saith the Lord."

Christ's people may, and I think always are, lacking in the improvement of gifts which he bestows, but their fault in not improving them should not be charged upon Christ as if he had not bestowed them.

Covetousness, pride, the fear of man and other such thoughts do certainly too much prevail with Christ's people, but these in no degree impeach his love and care towards them; for he possesses all fulness for them, and they shall not be "lacking, saith the Lord."

Hence the plenitude of gifts for the edification and well-being of Christ's people is a thing quite certain, because the word of God declares it; and to say otherwise is to make God a liar. If believers were divested of the fore-mentioned dispositions, and in simplicity seek that they might excel to the edifying of the Church, with as much attention as they seek temporal things, and it is their shame if they do not more than this, it would soon appear that there was no want of persons qualified for office; and evince the idleness of the plea, "That for want of gifts it is necessary to depart from the instituted order in eating the Lord's supper."

Although the preceding statement is calculated to satisfy every impartial mind, in as much as it is so full and plain, and as God cannot deny himself, every objection ought to fall before it; yet, as matter of fact to the contrary, we are urged to think that the practice of the church at Jerusalem is unquestionable as an example to future generations. *

Now, though of the thousands of disciples of which this church was composed, there were chosen men who had hazarded their lives, who could be dispatched to distant places as occasion required, out of whom deacons, and an apostle was chosen to succeed Judas, and even apostles themselves were there; † yet it seems

* Acts ii. 42. † Ch. 3. 4. 5. 6. &c.

we should not believe any such thing. It is difficult to speak to a matter so glaringly unscriptural, but it may with certainty be affirmed, that if our minds are prepared to believe such things, they are in a fair way to believe any thing, however untrue.

It is asked, "where has our Lord placed an inseparable connexion betwixt Elders and his supper?" And at the same time it is confessed, "That if any private member were to take the lead, and an Elder present and able to act; it could not be allowed conformably to that order appointed by Christ." Now if this do not "establish the connexion betwixt Elders and his supper," I do not know what it means.

Yet to make a difference among the ordinances of the gospel is treated as "clerical cant, and smelling rankly of the vocabulary of Babylon." Notwithstanding such vaunting language, I will be bold to affirm that there is a difference. In no ordinance of the gospel does any person exhibit that he or she is a visible member of any church on earth, save the Lord's supper.

Not in preaching, praying, exhorting, singing praises, nor even in baptism by water, in which there is indeed a baptizing into one body, but it is the one invisible church; but in the Lord's supper, such membership is conspicuously seen, for they are one body and one bread, being all partakers of that one bread.

Again, the scripture clearly shews that a church of Christ on earth is a representation of the whole redeemed gathered unto Christ their head. But where shall we see this likeness but in their attending at the supper, where a pastor presides and officiates? Here we see a likness to the chief shepherd and his flock, not only in the institution of his supper, but even in heaven, where the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, the great Pastor and leader of his people, "shall feed them and shall lead them beside fountains of living waters."

If pride, idleness, and other kindred ideas be allowed as lawful, then unbelief of God's word, and disobedience thereto arising herefrom, may consistently be accounted matters of forbearance. But we should be very careful how we father our idle schemes upon the word of God, as if the provisions thereof were defective, lest we fall under the disapprobation couched in these terms, "Who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts."

AN

ATTEMPT

to shew

THAT CHRIST ALLOWS AND AUTHORIZES HIS DISCIPLES

TO EAT HIS SUPPER

when they are necessarily

DESTITUTE OF PASTORS OR ELDERS.

BY JOHN DRIVER.

"Call no man Master upon earth, one is your Master even Christ." Matt. xxiii. 10.

"Hear ye him." Matt. xvii. 5.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt. xxviii. 20.

"He that heareth you heareth me." Luke, x. 16.

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As the Lord Jesus Christ is the only legislator in his kingdom, it becomes his loyal subjects to search his laws, in order to know what they should practise in their diversified circumstances and situations in life. Of course, when a number of these are united in the profession of the same faith, and have none among them who appear to be qualified for the office of pastor or elder, according to the divine directions on that subject, in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, it is their duty strictly to examine whether the Lord Jesus allows and authorizes them to eat *his supper* in their present circumstances or not. If he does not, to practise it would be highly criminal, as therein they would undervalue his wisdom, oppose his authority, and contemn his laws. And, on the other hand, if Christ does enjoin this command on his disciples, without any regard to elders or pastors, totally to neglect it would manifest base ingratitude, neglect of his authority and disregard of his precious word.

Now as the matter of our inquiry hath such important consequences attending it, we should have immediate recourse to the word of Christ, without addition or diminution, in order that our decision may be according to truth. Let us therefore refer to Luke, xxii. 14—19. Here we see that when our Lord had instituted his supper, he said to his disciples, "This do in remembrance of me" In these words we should, first, take notice of the duty enjoined, that is, the observance of his instituted supper, which is intended to set forth his body broken and his blood shed for the redemption of his people. In this ordinance the disciples have symbolically set before them the ground of pardon, justification, adoption, peace and hope. This is well calculated to draw off their attention from this vain and perishing world; to excite and inflame their love to Christ; to promote universal obedience, and to stimulate them to glorify Christ, who hath loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood. We should, in the second place, inquire, who are commanded to do this in remembrance of Christ? It appears from the context that his disciples only are addressed; for it seems that no other persons were then present. He does not say, you must do this only when some vicegerent of mine is present with you, by whom my headship or supreme authority is visibly represented before you. Nor does

we should first determine who or what kind of characters are pastors according to God's heart, they are certainly such as Paul described when he spoke of bishops to Timothy, and directed Titus to ordain elders in every city; see 1 Tim. iii. 2—7. Titus i. 5—9. We should, secondly, inquire whether the above-mentioned promise be absolute or conditional. The language is absolute and determinate: "I will give you pastors, &c." Now, if Christ is able to accomplish the will and design of his heart; he always has given, he now does and ever will give, as many pastors as are agreeable to Paul's description, from which it will evidently appear that many churches have pastors who are agreeable to their own hearts, but do not agree with the mind or heart of Christ. Such are the *covetous*, who take wages privately, and do not endeavour to prevent its being publicly reported that they receive none. Such also are the *selfwilled*, who ordain deacons, and cut off churches and members from their charity, in opposition to the general consent of the church to which they belong. Such likewise are the *impatient*, who cannot bear the least opposition or affront without being angry, spiteful and malevolent. Now if such as these be the pastors that are according to Christ's own heart, the apostle Paul did not know what the heart or mind of Christ was when he described their character. Again, if Christ will certainly give his people as many pastors and teachers as his heart designed, who shall through the influence of his holy spirit, be so effectual to feed them with knowledge and understanding, that they shall not lack any thing that is necessary, to preserve them from total and final seduction, and to fit them for his heavenly kingdom; where is there any reason to say that this statement diminishes the love and care of Christ towards his people, when he does not give them as many pastors as their hearts desire. Christ's own heart is the rule according to which he will bestow pastors, not theirs. It may be observed here that all the gifts which Christ received and bestows, for the purpose of calling and perfecting his people, are not confined to elders or pastors, it is only said that he gave "some pastors and teachers." Eph. iv. 11. For certainly men may and must teach before it can be known that they are apt to teach. And still when a man is known to be apt to teach, he may be destitute of some other qualification that is essential to the office of an elder. Now this system which is charged with diminishing Christ's love and care of his people, says or maintains that Christ will give pastors and teachers, by whom he will perfect and save his people.

And what can that system, (contained in a late publication entitled "Observations on that way which allows and authorizes the churches of Christ" 'to eat the Lord's supper without pastors), do more to advance the love of Christ to his people? Is there any thing better or more valuable than salvation? But we will hear the Observer speak for himself. He says, "hence the plenitude of gifts for the well-being of Christ's people is a thing quite certain." And again he says, "Christ's people may be,

and I think, always are lacking in the improvement of gifts which he bestows." And again: "If believers were divested of the fore-mentioned dispositions it would soon appear that there was no want of persons qualified for office." It is here asserted, in the first place, that the bestowment of gifts and qualifications is a thing quite certain. If it is so, then they must depend only on the power and faithfulness of Christ; for if they, in any degree, depend upon frail and changeable men, they cannot be quite certain; He next places the certainty of this plenitude of gifts on the wavering dispositions of men. For he says, "If men were divested of the fore-mentioned dispositions, it would soon appear that there was no want of persons qualified for office." Now I think that as Christ is ascended upon high, having led captivity captive, and is made head over all things for his body's sake, which is the church, and hath received gifts for the rebellious, that he can, and certainly will so far overcome the fore-mentioned dispositions of his people, that nothing shall be lacking that is essentially necessary to complete their salvation, Eph. iv. 12. But with regard to the improvement of those gifts, it may be truly said, that however culpable the disciples of Christ may be in neglecting to exercise their abilities designed for the benefit of the church, that their indolence cannot nullify his promises or frustrate his design, nor render the edification and perfection of his church abortive. For if their negligence can do these things, then Christ cannot, certainly, give his people pastors according to his own heart, he cannot accomplish his design, nor can he work all things after the counsel of his own will, or give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. From these observations, it plainly appears that however much the love and care of Christ towards his people be extolled, yet if it be not mentioned that his power his adequate thereunto, his people must be destitute of those things that are necessary to their well-being, both in this world and that which is to come. But it is said by the Observer, that "the well-being of Christ's people is as certain as their existence, in a spiritual sense." But if their existence, &c. depends on the wavering dispositions of men, (as he seems to say that the existence of the plenitude of gifts which are necessary to the well-being of Christ's people do), then it is possible that Christ's disciples may lose both their well-being and their existence in a spiritual sense. Now if this be the case, where do we see the everlasting love, unremitting care, and almighty power of Christ displayed towards his people. From this imperfect statement the judicious and candid reader will be able to judge whether that system which represents the bestowment of those gifts and qualifications which are designed to perfect the saints, as precarious, uncertain or conditional; or, that system which represents the bestowment of them as certain and unconditional, hath the greater tendency to advance or honour, the free, sovereign, rich and permanent love of Christ to his people. But farther this way is represented as an "idle plea," an "idle scheme," "It is ranked with pride, unbelief and

disobedience, and so cannot be borne with. But I ask, is that an "idle scheme" which teaches the disciples of Christ to pay a strict and unremitting attention, a hearty and constant obedience to the laws of Christ? If this be counted an "idle scheme," it is, in my opinion, impossible for the Observer, or any other man to point out what scheme would be calculated to promote diligence. As to *pride*, it teaches men to submit to the laws of Christ, and to take his yoke upon them, who was meek and lowly of heart. And with regard to *unbelief*, it teaches them to believe both his doctrines and commands, without regard to the opinions of men. And with respect to *disobedience*, it teaches the disciples of Christ, whether they have or have not elders, to observe all things in their due order that Christ hath commanded them. But, lastly, "this cannot be borne with." Awful declaration! It seems the Observer can bear with a church of Christ that is destitute of an elder, if she will not partake of the Lord's supper, while he expels a church, in similar circumstances, for observing it. I would ask him where is that command of Christ which obliges him to esteem and retain the former as christians, and to consider and exclude the latter as unbelieving, proud, idle and disobedient reprobates? Is it the scheme that repeals or neglects the laws of Christ, that so much engages his attention, receives his earnest patronage, and absorbs all his charity? And, on the other hand, is it the scheme that inculcates constant obedience to the laws of Christ, that receives his most severe censures, his most bitter opposition and complete expulsion?

I am of opinion, that as there are in the church of Christ, those whom the scriptures call children, young men and fathers; that is, men who possess different degrees of knowledge and conformity to Christ, there will need the exercise of much forbearance and caution, lest while we are casting out the tares we should root out the wheat also. True christian charity will suffer long and be kind. It will cover a multitude of trifling offences. It is the bond of perfectness; for by forbearing one another in love, the unity of the spirit is kept in the bond of peace.

Although the author of this pamphlet has been excluded from a church of Christ, for maintaining the sentiments it contains, yet he has not lost all hope of meeting many of those who have cast him out, in the society above. Into which society he earnestly prays that Christ would bring himself, and all of them; where we shall have no more need to dispute about the symbols, by which Christ's love, sufferings and death are represented to us. For there we shall behold him as he is, and have his image and love engraven on our whole persons, in indelible characters. Then our views, our practice and song, will harmoniously agree without one jar or discordant note.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain; who has redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."